

For Reference

NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS ROOM

Ex libris
UNIVERSITATIS
ALBERTAENSIS



TOWARDS THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL
AND TECHNICAL REVOLUTIONS

A THESIS

PRESENTED TO THE GENERAL FACULTY COUNCIL COMMITTEE
ON BACHELOR OF DIVINITY DEGREES IN CANDIDACY FOR
THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF DIVINITY

BY

RICHARD THOMAS PRICE, B. COMM.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

September, 1968

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
ST. STEPHEN'S THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that we have read and recommended to the General Faculty Council for acceptance, a thesis entitled TOWARDS THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL AND TECHNICAL REVOLUTIONS, submitted by Richard Thomas Price, B. Comm. in partial fulfillment of the degree of Bachelor of Divinity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

By writing a thesis one quickly becomes aware of the tremendous assistance rendered by the encouragement and support of other people. To the many individuals who have helped me, I would like to say thank you. Certainly Dr. T.R. Anderson, Professor of Christian Ethics at St. Stephen's College must come high on the list. Similarly my student colleagues and the faculty at the Ecumenical Institute, Chateau de Bossey. At the World Council of Churches Ecumenical Centre in Geneva, Dr. Paul Abrecht and Mauricio Lopez provided helpful information and insights.

Many thanks also to the "unsung heroines" who have tried to decipher my writing and type it in readable form. Mrs. Terry McAfee has been particularly helpful in this regard as she typed the final draft of the thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

Introduction.....	iii
A. The Need for Theological Perspectives on Revolution.	iii
B. The Choice of Theologians.	iv
C. The Direction, Method and Focus of the Thesis.	v
Chapter I A REVOLUTIONARY WORLD.....	1
A. The Meaning and Types of Revolution.	1
B. The Secularization Process Underlying Change.	5
C. Three Manifestations of Revolution.	8
D. The World Picture.	14
Chapter II THEOLOGICAL ENCOUNTER WITH REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE.....	18
A. The Key Theological Questions.	18
B. Christ's Promise Within the Asian Revolution - M.M. Thomas.	19
i. Insights of Biblical Theology	23
ii. The Church and the New Humanity	25
iii. Theology, Ideological Secularism and Social Change.	27
C. God's Presence in Messianic Movements - Richard Shaull.	31
i. Biblical Themes	33
ii. The Stance of the Church in Society.	37
iii. Theological Interaction with Social Change and Revolutionary Ideology.	38
iv. The New Man.	40
D. God's Kingdom and the Secular City - Harvey Cox	41
i. Biblical Eschatology	43
ii. A New Stance for the Church	46
iii. Theology, Marxist Ideology and Social Change.	48
iv. What Does it Mean to be Human?	50
Chapter III THEOLOGY OF REVOLUTION - AN EVALUATION.....	53
A. Key Questions for a Critique.	53
B. M.M. Thomas - A Critical Evaluation	54
i. Historical	54
ii. Biblical	56
iii. Theological	61
iv. Secular	62

C. Richard Shaull - A Critical Evaluation	63
i. Historical	63
ii. Biblical	65
iii. Theological	70
iv. Secular	74
D. Harvey Cox - A Critical Evaluation	76
i. Historical	76
ii. Biblical	79
iii. Theological	82
iv. Secular	84
 Chapter IV TOWARDS THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON REV- OLUTIONS AND NEW FRONTIERS FOR MISSION.....	 86
A. God's Action in Revolutionary Movements.	87
B. Eschatology and God's Kingdom.	90
C. God's Mission and the Church	93
D. New Frontiers for Mission.	105
 Bibliography.....	 108

TOWARDS THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL AND TECHNICAL REVOLUTIONS

Introduction.

A. The Need for Theological Perspectives on Revolutions.

It is an amazing fact that despite the tremendous effect which revolutions have had on the patterns of life of many nations including the United States, Russia, China, France and Great Britain, there has been little positive theological reflection on revolutions. There are numerous theological ecclesiastical and ideological reasons for this. Generally the established church has tended to side with the existing governments and the structures which insure law and order. The recent example of the Cuban revolution provides us with a case in point. In the time of revolution and crisis, the church found itself with very few Christian guidelines of thought and action on which to rely. For many Cuban Christians, this lack of ethical direction coupled with the upheaval of political life proved to be too much, and they chose to leave their country to escape the revolution. Yet the revolutionary movement and later the government of Fidel Castro fervently sought social justice - much in the style of the Old Testament prophets. Why then must Christians find themselves alienated from their society when it turns to revolution? Can the good news of the gospel not confront and speak relevantly to the crucial problem of revolutions in the twentieth century?

The fact of revolution is not any longer an isolated phenomenon but is beginning to effect the lives of everyone. Even in the

more stable western democracies, radical movements of change are underway with the black power revolt in the United States and the militant student activities in West Berlin, Paris and elsewhere. Through the techniques of automation and cybernation, technology is bringing massive new influences to bear on the cultures of the world. The World Council of Churches Church and Society Conference meeting in Geneva, Switzerland in 1966 addressed itself to these profound facts of revolution. The Conference theme was "Christians in the Technical and Social Revolutions of our Time". Theologians found themselves largely unprepared for this encounter with revolutionary change. Two years later they held a follow-up theological consultation in Zagorsk, Russia to clarify the issues, define revolution and regroup their forces! Theological reflection on revolutions was also a topic of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches meeting in Uppsala, Sweden in July, 1968. The revolutionary world has "burst in" on the churches and they have been forced to grapple with the realities of the world - a world they believe to be God's world.

B The Choice of Theologians.

Several theologians though have made creative attempts to deal with this new revolutionary reality. Charles West, a leader of the Geneva Conference, analyzed the conference discussion and asserted in a paper for "Background Information for Church and Society" (No. 38), that it was a theological struggle between the "Technologists" and the "Revolutionaries". West used three typologies to describe the theological positions developed at the conference,

they were: i) the theological technocrats; ii) the responsible society theologians; and iii) the theological guerillas. From these three different positions, I have chosen three theologians who can be regarded as representatives of these positions, namely: i) Harvey Cox; ii) M.M. Thomas; and iii) Richard Shaull. Each theologian has developed theological perspectives on social and technical revolutions although their area of concentration does vary. In representing these three theological positions, these men also spring from different confessional backgrounds and essentially their experience lies in different continents of the world. Harvey Cox, an American Baptist, has sparked much excitement and discussion through his book The Secular City, especially in North American and European Circles. M.M. Thomas, a lay theologian from the Orthodox Church of India, is an accepted leader in the Asian and African discussions on revolution and rapid social change. Richard Shaull, through his experiences as a Presbyterian missionary in Brazil, has had a tremendous influence on developing young theologians in Latin America. A significant factor is that these theologians have done the major portion of their writing in the last fifteen years so that we will get a timely view of theology in dialogue with society on the "frontiers of revolution". The fact that they are contemporary writers is extremely important, because the speed of change is now so accelerated that the historical situation of our day is quite unique.

C The Direction, Method and Focus of the Thesis.

The perspectives on revolution of these theologians must

however be placed within a certain framework. A statement of the direction and method of this thesis is required. The methodology will involve key elements of biblical hermeneutics by taking seriously both the biblical message and the situation of modern man. We must carry on a running conversation between the revolutionary drama that is unfolding on the contemporary stage of human history and our biblical theological heritage. It will not only be necessary to take both elements seriously but also to guard against the temptation of identifying too simply or absolutely the will of God with the particular course of history which we happen to favor. For if we are to take the risk of interpreting history through the eyes of faith, we must recognize the relativity of our view and be ready to revise our interpretations.

Nevertheless we must be willing to take the risk involved for, as Hendrikus Berkhof points out, it is an essential task:

We must look around not only in the great world events in which our contribution is so small, but also in our own country and in our own immediate surroundings, in order to discover and support positive signs of Christ's dominion (even far outside the Christian Church), and discover and oppose the antichristian tendencies (even in the heart of the Christian Church). For the meaning of our own life is fulfilled only when we take part in the meaning of history. 1.

So this conversation must lead us on to the task of interpretation and a willingness to point concretely to the manifestations of Christ's lordship in history. Pointing to these "signs of the times" will be a place of contact between our biblical origins and the contemporary drama of revolution. Cox, Thomas and Shaul

1 Berkhof, H. Christ the Meaning of History, p. 204

are all involved in these tasks of interpretation of current events and conversation with the Scripture. A central theological task will be to evaluate on the basis of our methodology how successful their theological efforts have been.

These theological concerns are significant in shaping the direction of where we are going. However, theology must never allow itself to become mere armchair speculation rather it must be rooted in the real situations of the world with all their anxieties and hopes. Thus the thesis begins with an examination of our revolutionary world. Our initial task is to consider what we mean by "revolution" in a world where revolutionary rhetoric abounds. The definitions of revolution will be supplemented with an examination of the historical process of secularization which underlies most of our current change. We will then plunge into three situation "sketches" of revolution from India, Brazil and Boston, U.S.A. These situation studies provide a proper starting point in the realities of the world and serve as a background for the thought of these theologians. India is the setting for the majority of writings and action of M.M. Thomas. Similarly Brazil provides the revolutionary conditions that sparked the theological reflections of Richard Shaull. Boston, U.S.A. is the North American example of a secular city in Harvey Cox's popular book. Following the presentation of situation sketches, we can expand our horizon again and examine the relationship of India, Brazil and Boston to the problems of world economic development.

After this first section on the revolutionary world, our major task will be to report how M.M. Thomas, Richard Shaull and Harvey Cox

have grappled theologically with the issues raised by these situations. Several central theological questions have been raised in the current ecumenical discussions on this subject and allow us to focus our examination. However this discussion on theology of revolution is still largely explorative and cannot yet be regarded as definitive. Consequently an important chapter will be a critical evaluation of the work of Thomas, Shaul and Cox using several different perspectives including the methodology referred to earlier. On this basis, it will be possible to select and highlight a few key theological perspectives that have emerged and point to new directions for further reflections on revolutionary action. The last chapter will be set in the context of "missio dei" (God's mission) and will involve an examination of various strategies of action for the Christian Church; notably strategies of violent and non-violent change. This will lead us to a glimpse of new frontiers for mission.

Thus the emphasis and focus for the thesis will be placed on the critical dialogue between theology and the issues of social and technical revolutions as they are raised in different situations. I have chosen to begin with the realities of the situation and then move on to the biblical theological perspectives, in an attempt to find a way out of the endless debate between situation ethics and principle ethics. Christian social ethics must encourage a "dialectical interaction between situations and principles. I will thus try to avoid a tendency among some to take Christian principles and rigidly apply them to every situation. On the other hand, I

will try to avoid getting so caught up in the situation that biblical thinking no longer provides perspectives and criteria for understanding and acting in the situation.

With this outline and methodology providing our direction, it is clear that many new challenges, avenues of thought and questions await us. The task ahead is enormous but the stakes are high! One of the many difficult questions of our endeavor will be this: do these historical movements embodying change manifest signs of the radical newness of God or do they represent merely a superficial newness? Let us begin by looking at God's world, which is today "a revolutionary world".

CHAPTER I

A REVOLUTIONARY WORLD

"Revolutions" and revolutionary rhetoric abound in our global village. Guerilla bands, student manifestations and technological change are quickly becoming part of the international scene. Television and newspapers bring us news of disruption, confrontation and violence. "Counter-revolutionary" forces enter the scene. Reports of revolution come in from every corner of the world:

- a "peaceful revolution" effects some new freedoms in the public institutions of Czechoslovakia
- Che Guevara, a Cuban, is killed by the army during a "revolution" in Bolivia
- Dr. Christian Barnard successfully develops a "revolutionary" technique for heart transplants in South Africa
- militant students and workers attempt to "make a revolution" in France
- Dr. Martin Luther King, an advocate of "non-violent Negro revolution", is assassinated on a hotel balcony in Memphis, Tennessee

How are we to understand these events as they come pouring in upon us? What is the meaning of "revolution" when it is used in so many different ways?

A The Meaning and Types of Revolutions

The road to understanding must begin with a definition of terms. The recent Zagorsk theological consultation pointed out the difficulties and misunderstandings of the pluralistic use of the term "revolutions". It then undertook to develop a set of definitions which

would take into account world-wide revolutionary aspirations. It is clear that Zagorsk has not only broken new ground but also that this consultation is bound to have a significant effect on the future of these theological discussions on revolution. For these reasons, it will be very important to record the definitions of revolution that were developed at Zagorsk, namely:

Revolution... in its modern usage,... is applied to the coming of a quite different order, often in sharp discontinuity with the one that preceded it, affecting world-wide structures (economic, social, political, cultural and also religious) and promising a better order with a changed man. In this contemporary meaning, revolution evoked simultaneously an abrupt break and overturning of the established national and international order and the promise of new life. But it is necessary to distinguish three levels in its world-wide use.

(a) In the strict sense and in the context of the demand of the masses for social justice, revolution means changing the social class holding economic and political power, mainly by transformation of the system of property, with a consequent replacing of political leaders. This revolution seeks to change the locus of power to enable participation of the masses in making decisions. It therefore seeks to fulfill a rather formal definition of democracy: power to people. It has a particular urgency in countries where such democracy has only a limited existence or practically no existence at all...

(b) In a sense, revolution refers to all the changes (especially technological) which by their tempo, their comprehensiveness and their power, break old structures and attitudes. This type of revolution, especially if it comes from outside of the tradition and the cultural consciousness, radically disrupts established patterns of social life, and often causes brutality and suffering, which are however not deliberately planned but are a by-product of the new technical innovations and of the necessary adjustment of society to these...

(c) Revolution in a third sense signifies the protests of groups against their exclusion from the society in which they live, against not having a part in either

the rewards of its development, or responsibility for its decisions, or the making of its laws. These protests are able to arise in societies otherwise accustomed to democratic practises and cultural mobility, when these societies seem incapable of offering certain of their members - sometimes all of them - valid motivating objectives. Revolution thus means opposition to existing conformism, refusal to be satisfied with minor objectives like growth of productivity and social adjustment; it is characterized sometimes by the search for utopia or even the break-up of a society so that man can become politically, culturally and aesthetically creative and not merely contest with affluence. Though the conscious aim of groups involved is a break up of the status quo, and may lead to violence, this is better described as revolutionary protest. 1

These definitions will likely prove to be quite beneficial as we come to grips with contemporary revolutionary phenomena. The first sentence of the quotation which encompasses the various elements of this radical transformation, is helpful if a "summary type" definition of revolution is required for clarification. As different manifestations or levels of this global revolution, I propose to label section (a) as a "social" revolution, section (b) as a "technological-cultural revolution" and section (c) as "revolutionary protest". We are dealing then with three revolutions (social revolution, technological-cultural revolution and revolutionary protest) which are related to each other and form part of a global revolution for greater justice, enlarged participation and a more meaningful human life. These latter values are the overall goals of the revolution although each revolution will have somewhat different specific objectives within that framework.

It is important to distinguish between goals and the various

1 "Theological Issues in Church and Society" Study Encounter, Vol. 1V No. 2. 1968, p. 75f.

strategies employed for achieving these goals. Strategies are a special source of confusion and controversy in our understanding of revolutions. As we have seen, the previous definitions dealt more with goals than strategies. In the public mind, there is an unfortunate tendency to equate tactics, such as violence, with the essence of revolution. I will try to demonstrate why this is not so. Revolutionary goals, such as a participatory democracy or "power to the people", in fact would have a wide base of support. By its very nature, strategy (the means of achieving the revolutionary goals) is controversial and it is therefore difficult to achieve a popular consensus. For instance, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr. and Che Guevara all had various revolutionary goals but each sought different ways of achieving their goals. The urgency of the situation and their faith in different forms of change, dictated their choice of strategy for example, Kennedy - democratic processes, King - non-violent civil disobedience, Guevara - violent guerilla activity. Strategies for revolutionary change can theoretically involve all these various methods in bringing about social change. Revolution, then, should not be simply equated with violence.

Before we leave this question of definition of terms, it will be useful to relate these Zagorsk definitions to previous ecumenical thought in this regard. The World Council of Churches undertook a study of rapid social change in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The International Ecumenical Study Conference of Thessalonica, Greece, in 1959 addressed itself to the question - "What is

rapid social change?" - and responded in the following manner:

The rapid social change taking place in the world today has the speed and dimensions of revolution, but it is not a single revolution. Profound changes in culture, politics, economics and religion are all occurring together in many countries in the world. The past 400 years have seen various revolutions. In the reformation there was religious renewal; in the American and French revolutions, struggles for freedom from foreign rule and for the rights of man; in the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution, the use of science and reason for the service of man, and their embodiment in the dynamic economic systems based on the new technology; in the Proletarian Revolution, the upsurge of demands for economic justice and the development of the social welfare state. For the most part these revolutions are not completed; they are still going on and men still seek to achieve their aims.

In the rapid social change now underway in Africa, Asia and Latin America, these revolutions are gathered into one; they take on vast new dimensions especially in the African and Asian setting. The basic issues of each are being fought out simultaneously in nearly every country, although the stages differ from country to country. 2.

For the writers of that document, it is clear that rapid social change meant revolution - in fact many revolutions together. Aspects of rapid social change are embodied in the Zagorsk definitions of social revolution and technological - cultural revolution. It is helpful to look back in history to see how our understanding of the world in which we live has changed and developed. Revolution, however, is a more appropriate term for our day as the word embodies the same type of dynamism that "democracy" had in the 19th century.

B The Secularization Process Underlying Change

As a method of providing further background for the situation case sketches, let us consider the historical phenomena of secular-

ization. One of the earliest theological discussions on secularization occurred at the Ecumenical Institute of Bossey, Switzerland, where Professor Charles West submitted a definition of secularization which provides a good starting point for examining this concept, namely:

the withdrawal of areas of thought and life from religious - and finally also from metaphysical - control, and the attempt to understand and live in these areas in terms which they alone offer. 3

West goes on to comment that secularization seems to take two main forms - a secularization of knowledge and a secularization of a style of life. Being freed from absolute dogmas and ultimate points of reference, the "relativist" secular man, is still tempted to absolutize his position either into complacent optimism or into existential despair.

This question of secularization is pushed along a few steps further by Arend Th Van Leeuwen, in his recent book Christianity in World History, as he relates it to technology and revolution in the following way:

Is it not the process of emancipation from religious constraints, which is usually referred to as secularization, itself a product of Western civilization and has it not been set in motion by forces matured in the course of Christian history? Are not all the non-religious elements of Western civilization - modern technology, science, democracy, capitalism, socialism, nationalism - which have thrust their way into the non-western countries and were welcomed there, among the fruits of that very civilization which was formed and driven forward by the dynamic spirit of christianity? Could it be that in modern western civilization "Christianity" is submerged, that it is now coming to non-western nations in the guise of "secularism" and incognito, so to speak? 4

3 West, Charles, Conference Report (Ecumenical Institute) September 1959, paper by C. West, page 1.

4 Van Leeuwen, A. Christianity in World History, page 16.

Van Leeuwen bases his approach on the thesis that the roots of western history are to be found in the biblical history of the people of Israel. In his book, he demonstrates how the Hebrew people, in contrast to the surrounding people and nations, continually raised protests against: sacralizing idols and nature; submitting to mysticism or fate; and divinizing kings and kingdoms. These prophetic protests were against an "ontocratic" pattern of existence that linked the divine with the endless cycle of nature and its cosmic totality. These ontocratic patterns which were characteristic of the traditional non-western society, have been broken by the secularizing process which in many instances was carried by the missionary movement.

I do not now propose to evaluate this thesis of Van Leeuwen but would like to point out that it has been influential in the thought of all three theologians, especially Richard Shaull. For instance, Shaull examines the revolutionary impact of secularization which frees men to question all authorities and liberates them to change structures which have become authoritarian and idolatrous. Most theological discussion on the importance of secularization usually involves a careful attempt to point out the difference between secularization and the fixed ideology: secularism. In the preparatory documents of the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Uppsala, Sweden, the following useful definitions are presented:

"Secularization, properly understood as a historical process, can be a positive affirmation of the true potentialities of man and the world, although secularism, as the ideology of a closed world, can be destructive of man's true freedom and dignity". 5

5 Drafts for Sections - Uppsala 68 (Section V the Worship of God in a Secular Age), page 97.

The document rightly points out that these concepts are related and that it would be a mistake to push the distinctions too far. In the actual assembly, secularization itself was seen to have both the positive liberating possibilities and the negative enslaving possibilities (secularism). We will find, as we now examine the various situations, the extreme importance of this process of secularization and its profound effect on the Twentieth Century.

C Three Manifestations of Revolution

As we visit India, Brazil and United States, let us embark on a "flight of imagination" boarding a jet - the symbol of the transportation revolution! Our first stop is New Delhi, India. Before long one becomes overwhelmed at the staggering facts of the situation, in a country of over 500 million people. The life expectancy is 42 years and the infant mortality rate is 146 for every 1000 live births. In the field of education, 73% of the people cannot read or write and only 10% of the population attend school. The average personal income is \$1.30 per week and there is only one doctor for every 500 people. Clearly the obstacles confronting the people are enormous. Let us now look at the political, economic and social measures undertaken by the Indian Government since their independence in 1948, as they are traced by Thomas and Richard Taylor in the book Mud Walls and Steel Mills. The title of the book perhaps symbolizes the struggle of India. Despite the fact that tremendous efforts are being made to industrialize the country, for example steel mills; increase agricultural

productivity; and raise the standard of living; - the mud walls, poverty and starvation of the traditional society still haunt their existence. The question is raised - can the demand for social justice be achieved under a democratic government even using techniques of a mixed economy and government planning? The fight to maintain a sense of nationhood must be continued against those who would retreat into narrow religious or communal isolationism. The movement from a basic village economy to a modern industrial economy is a tremendous and basic task for the economic development and is essential to political and social reform. Steel mills have been built by both government and private sectors to ensure competition between them. Land reform and improved techniques for agricultural production have been introduced. Change in the social sphere has come as well. Large areas of communal and family life have been placed under the rule of law so individuals have gained freedom in breaking out from traditional spheres of influence. Urbanization or "citification" has brought changes in social patterns, which have affected both city and village life, especially in a search for new forms of community and new sets of values. Pressure is being put on traditional caste systems to move from a closed system to an open pluralistic society. Community development programs in the villages spark village cooperatives and new ideas of community. All of these changes do not take place in isolation from each other, but rather we find a constant inter-action between these various political, social and economic factors as they confront traditional structures and patterns of society.

It is clear that important changes have begun to take place

and that the government is moving in the right direction. The question still remains - can the needed changes occur quickly enough to bring real social justice to India? Indians from every sphere of society are increasingly being called upon to join the government and voluntary agencies in this most important struggle. Our stopover in Asia must now come to a temporary halt as we climb aboard the jet and head south to Latin America.

A popular revolutionary song in Brazil - Song of the Underdeveloped - tells of a sleeping giant who wakes up! Symbolizing this awakening are the sleek, jet aircraft which fly into Rio de Janeiro daily. Yet in contrast to this modern sign, one still finds a Brazilian peasant clinging to superstitious tradition, symbolized by the mysterious "amulet". Brazil is a study in contrast between:

- new and old
- rich and poor
- bureaucrat and revolutionary
- well-fed and starving

The elite of the Brazilian society hold the status, wealth and power of the affluent society. This group has the real economic and political control and they find it in their best interests to cooperate with the corresponding power structure of the developed western world. The poor, on the other hand, are described by Dr. M. Bonino of Argentina as:

...the face of Latin America and of the whole underdeveloped world: a face contorted by hunger, expectation and wrath. This is the face of the revolutionary man. 6

The contrast becomes even more striking when one realizes the tremendous resource potential of Brazil.

Historically, we can note that Brazil gained its independence from Portugal over a century ago. It was however only a "political" revolution or a changing of ruling classes. Brazil certainly does not have the developed democratic institutions of India! From another point of view, its independence from Portugal was only partial because economic exploitation from overseas continued. In the 1930's, with the depression and its decreased flow of manufactured goods from the developed countries, Brazil was able to begin the process of industrial development. Industrialization brought many changes, especially an exodus from the rural areas to the cities. A new class of urban proletariat was formed and "shanty town" slum areas, with terrible conditions, began to spring up in most cities. An industrial bourgeoisie also came into being and they began to assert their position politically. In the countryside, the majority of the people remained in dire poverty. With over half of the people of Brazil depending on the land for their work and food, 81.69% of the land is in the hands of 14.41% of the people (the Brazilian landowners). Farm mechanization is extremely low and much land around the cities is used for growing sugar cane despite the desperate food shortages of the urban centres. Starvation has become an increasing problem in many parts of the country with over fifty percent of the babies dying before the age of five and an average life expectancy of forty six years. (In north-eastern Brazil, a peasant's life is spent after 30 years). Agrarian reform with land re-distribution and better food production is

essential for the welfare of the majority of the people. Reforms will be needed in health and education also, with fifty percent of the population illiterate and well over nine hundred municipalities without a single doctor.

However, changes are being furthered by the formation of various groups - trade unions, student movements, political associations - which are representing the sentiments of the Brazilian masses and pressing the government for greater social justice. The structural changes, which must be effected, are so radical that the present vested interests will put up a tremendous struggle. Brazilians are increasingly being called either to accept the status quo or to join the forces of those who are fighting to change it. Clearly it is a revolutionary situation!

Now let us board our jet at Rio and head north to Logan Airport in Boston, United States. Boston and its immediate vicinity present graphically the contrast between old and new. Harvey Cox describes Boston as having

just enough Old World elegance and space-age streamlining to make it the most transparent American example of the emergence of the secular city. 7

Boston gained this old world elegance through the planning and building of a former era of aristocrats. Today urban renewal is changing the face of Boston and with striking architectural creativity, the new Boston city hall and government centre mark these changes. In the residential areas many new high-rise apartment buildings are changing the landscape. Dramatic growth

7 Cox, Harvey, The Secular City, page 95.

has also occurred with a host of industrial and technical enterprises springing up along the freeway circling Boston, "route 128". These industries are stimulated by the enormous amount of technological research that is carried on at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University. The way to automation, the magnetic - core memory cell of the computer, was born at M.I.T. Similarly, the guidance system of the Polaris missile was developed there. Consequently much of the electronics industry and aerospace research is located near Boston. Thus we find the heart of a great deal of advanced American technology as well as a centre of research for future technological advances. On the industrial scene, a strong labour union movement has developed there so we find many of the present-day conflicts over machines replacing men! In Boston's inner city a serious conflict has developed. The negro ghetto of Roxsbury exploded with riots during a long hot summer day in 1966. The causes of this explosion are similar to those of other riots in America - poor quality education, few jobs and bad housing coupled with white racism. Problems of social change for the Negro poor in Boston are made more difficult by the immigrant groups from Ireland, Italy and Eastern Europe, who now have a stake in society and wish to keep things the way they are. This latter group has managed to secure political power in the city. To compound the economic problems of Boston, many of the middle class and wealthy residents have moved to the suburbs thus depriving the city of its tax base. The suburbanites use the services and facilities of the city during the day and then return safely to their tax

haven home in the evening. The costs of providing schools, police force and the other services that make up most modern cities are staggering for the small base of taxation. Thus we find that even in sedate Boston, there are sources of conflict and resistance to change.

Real antagonism has arisen between the city fathers and the suburbanities, the Negro poor and the immigrant middle class, and the management and labour groups. Can these conflicts be resolved in reconciliation and positive steps forward? There is some reason for hope in the liberal and progressive voting tradition in state elections of the Irish Roman Catholic group, who predominate in the area. For instance, in the state of Massachusetts they have elected a Negro Republican, E. Brooke and a progressive Democrat, Ted Kennedy, as their senators. Can we assume however that this liberal political tradition will be able to forge the proper elements for a radical solution to the conflicts that are part of Boston's present existence?

D The World Picture

These case sketches bring us to some awareness of the political, economic and cultural struggles that are going on in various parts of the world. It would however, be a mistake not to go on to mention the world economic development question which is a very important factor in these situations especially in Brazil and India. The problem is not only that the rich are getting richer and the poor poorer, but this economic gap is developing into a racial confrontation between the "white northern" and the "black or coloured southern" hemisphere. We will be able to see

these issues on a smaller scale by choosing a few examples of the economic relations of Brazil and India and the United States. The importance of economic development for the poor nations cannot be underestimated for without it they can have no meaningful political sovereignty. Generally, people cannot understand why world poverty exists and how it came about because they lack the understanding provided by the historical background and a sociological analysis. The present situation is that the developed countries, representing 20% of the world's population, hold 80% of the world's wealth.⁸ The world community has been described as a group of twenty people living in a cellar, with four of the people having over half of the food. The situation is explosive!

If we are to understand how this came about, we must examine the trading empires as they grew up historically. Britain, for instance, began trade with Asia as a follow-up to the East-West commerce and contacts of the Crusades. This was essentially a trade relationship and only in the 18th Century did Britain establish colonies which were then really a by-product of trade. In the 19th century, though, patterns were established which were to have a permanent effect, namely, the decision as to which countries were to produce manufactured goods and which were to supply raw materials. As a result of the Industrial Revolution, Britain took the lead in manufacturing while her colonies supplied the raw materials. Half-way through the twentieth century, Britain's political empire has disappeared but the trade patterns, which she and other European nations had established, remained. The United States has now taken

⁸ Statistics formed part of a speech by Barbara Ward, an eminent economist in the British House of Commons, April 20, 1968 (see also her book Rich Nations, Poor Nations and the British Hazelmere Declaration) These references are the source of the statistics which follow.

over the role as the leading nation for manufactured goods and in effect, has established a form of economic imperialism over half the globe! The world economy is still essentially the same as the colonial empire left it. Evidence for this is found in the fact that the ex-colonial nations produce only five percent of the world's manufactured goods and are involved with only nineteen percent of the world's trade. Indeed the economic situation for these nations is getting worse, with chemicals and plastics providing synthetic substitutes for many raw materials. Technology and research then, tends to reinforce the present gap. Raw material prices have tended to decrease with the difficulty of controlling the goods flowing into the market. Brazil, for instance, has half of its exports in coffee. Between 1953 and 1961 their coffee exports increased by nine percent in volume, but their revenue fell by thirty-five percent. A "we - they" attitude still exists on the international market and this is bolstered by the ideology that if the market is left alone, it will correct itself. This ideology ignores the fact that the market is not basically redistributory and that essential political change is required if we are to have international economic justice. The disparity of the present situation is illustrated by the fact that the United States will spend twenty or thirty billion dollars on research done in a year, a sum approximately equal to the annual Gross National Product of India. Similarly the American defense budget is sixty percent greater than India's entire national income. Coupled with these economic factors is the population explosion of three percent per year. Food production is not keeping pace with this

increase. Solutions to the problem demand that much capital be invested in order to utilize the techniques of an agricultural revolution. The poor nations do not have this capital. Consequently several United Nations experts are predicting a world famine in the 1980's. We appear to be living in an apocalyptic era! The urgency of these issues demands an appreciation of the gravity of the situation and a willingness to act. Our study of revolutions must not lose sight of these sobering economic facts, for any meaningful revolution in the political arena must also involve a change in the international and national structures of economic power.

While our examination of the revolutionary world in which we live will continue, we have established a setting for theological reflection to take place. The situations are raising crucial issues for the world and for the church! Experts, activists and socially concerned people are struggling to find some way forward. The question is now put to the theologian - will he join in this struggle for a new society?

CHAPTER II

THEOLOGICAL ENCOUNTER WITH REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE

In the dramatic movements and violence of a revolutionary world, is there a point of contact with theological reflection? This question would likely evoke a variety of responses from various sectors of society. It is clear that we are embarking on a voyage of theological enquiry where the waters are uncharted and the final destination beyond our present horizon. Several theologians have begun the task of exploring the churning waters of change in our society and have recorded their reflections.

A The Key Theological Questions

Our global village and the situations of India, Brazil and Boston, U.S.A. have brought to light many crucial issues and questions which challenge existing thought and action patterns. At this stage, we must put forward a word of caution. Theologians are no longer cast in the catechetical teaching role of former times and in our complex era, they must be content more with raising pertinent questions in a inter-disciplinary dialogue rather than providing "pat" answers. As we consider theological responses to the issues of a revolutionary world, it is necessary to subscribe to a certain methodology and to set forth definite limits to our task. Several key theological questions emerge from the Geneva Conference and the recent theological consultation in Zagorsk, Russia.

- i How can we discern God's action in the revolutionary movements of history?

- ii What insights do biblical theology and especially eschatology bring to these issues?
- iii Is there a new basis for the stance and action of the universal church?
- iv What is the role of theology in relation to ideology and social change?
- v How are we to understand what it means to be fully human, both for today and in a future society?

These questions will provide a focus and direction for our main points of concern in this chapter. If we look more closely at the questions, we can detect the underlying Christian understanding of: Christ; history; man; Church; and eschatology. I propose to begin relating these questions to a consideration of M.M. Thomas, then move on to Richard Shaull and finish with Harvey Cox. Since each theologian has developed a special interest at different points of contemporary change, it will be important to develop certain emphasis in consideration of their work, for example: M.M. Thomas - cultural aspects of revolution; Richard Shaull - social revolution; and Harvey Cox - technological aspects of revolution. Thomas and Cox reflect on the "technological-cultural" revolution mentioned previously. With this methodology and framework in mind, perhaps we can now set in motion this theological encounter with revolutionary change.

B Christ's Promise within the Asian Revolution - M.M. Thomas

M.M. Thomas from India is the leading spokesman, in the contemporary ecumenical movement, for the urgent demands of Asia and Africa. His overwhelming concern is to find the relation between a dynamic concept of history and man for social renewal and

salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. In his book The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, Thomas explains carefully his theological and historical understanding of why it is necessary to raise and begin answering the question - what is God doing in contemporary revolutionary events? He notes the warnings made at the New Delhi Assembly of the World Council of Churches about the temptation to "see the hand of God in particular movements of history of which we personally approve or claim his blessings for every cause which seems righteous at the moment". 1 Thomas acknowledges also the warnings of theologians from Germany who raise the danger presented by the "Messianic" National Socialism. Thomas sees that his task as a theologian is "not to find divine sanction for a historical movement, but to help discern what is of Christ and what is of the devil in that movement so that we may know the nature of our response in faith". 2 Thomas seeks to see what is happening from the stance of faith seeking understanding - seeing events through the eyes of the "new humanity of Jesus Christ". This vision, however, is through a glass darkly and thus is only a "partial" vision. It is helpful at this stage to note that his approach to this vital question is confessional in nature as illustrated in his article "The Christian Confession in the Asian Revolution". 3 Thomas takes seriously the Christian assertion that Jesus is the Lord and Christ of history. For him this means that there is not a salvation history within the framework of secular

1 The New Delhi Report (3rd Assembly of W.C.C.) p. 85

2 Thomas, M.M. The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, p.22

3 Mackie, R.C. and West, C.C. The Sufficiency of God, p.166f

history but that Christ is victorious over the principalities and powers of the secular history as well. So it is through pointing to this creation, judgment and redemption of Christ in history that a Christian is given guidance and courage to participate in the Asian revolution. For the Church must dare to be prophetic by pointing to what is creaturely and what is idolatrous in the movements or events of history. By affirming the creaturely and rejecting the idolatry, the Church is helping to prevent idolatry from becoming institutionalized. Thomas seems aware of the risks involved in this task, but feels this is a risk which Christians must take.

With this important preamble as the basis for his position, Thomas then states where he sees God active in the midst of Asian nationalism or as he puts it in another article, "Christ's Promise Within the Revolution". Thomas implicitly equates the Asian revolution with Asian nationalism and with the forces which come with this nationalism, for example, humanism, technological development, unique self-hood. Through the creation of better conditions for human dignity, creativity, and fuller human living, Thomas sees the hand of a providential God at work. This has not come unambiguously, for greater freedom and creativity has also meant greater possibilities for destruction and irresponsible use of freedom and creativity. Greater awareness of what it means to be a person has meant new chances for better community life and relations with other people, but also greater possibilities of alienation. The creative drives evoked through a quest for national unity have not come without an accompanying messianism. Nevertheless, the opportunities

and existence of a more complete human life come as a gift of Christ. The second aspect of God's action is the preparation of man to encounter the challenge of the gospel. As people in a society rebel and break away from traditional moorings, their newly found freedom and autonomy allows them to make decisions for themselves. Man begins to raise questions which are quite basic to his relation with Christ - "Who am I?" - "Where am I going?" - "What does this freedom really mean for my vocation and my life?" Thomas asserts that Asians are now confronted with a "personal" challenge to decide for or against Jesus Christ. They won't automatically decide for Christ but if they reject him, it is necessary that they find another alternative which will present a scheme of redemption, eschatology, a church, and a christ. This alternative scheme is seen by Thomas as the antichrist.

In his more recent writings, Thomas has seen a third aspect of God's action - through God's judgment against the Asian Church because of its too close identification of the gospel with Western culture and imperialism. This judgment, coming via the vehicle of nationalism, has called forth both repentance and renewal in the life of the Asian Church. A new awareness of how the gospel transcends cultures and political systems has developed. It has now been possible to establish a more indigenous national Church which can relate both positively and with critical scrutiny to the developments of the nation in the context of the world situation. In this last statement we find the essence of Thomas' view towards revolution, namely that the Church must not try to save itself from the revolution, rather it must relate positively

but critically to the revolution. This "responsible society" position, which shows the influence of Professor Wendland from Germany, is distinguished from what Thomas considers to be false approaches, namely: i) individual non-involvement and pietism; ii) a purely negative reaction; and iii) a blessing or benediction of the revolution. God's action in the revolution, though, has greater implications than simply as a source of guidance for participation in the Asian revolution. For Christ's gospel of "redemption and new creation" must be proclaimed to meet the deepest needs of the revolution and to help ensure that there is no betrayal of the revolution. It is here that we must now turn more specifically to the biblical basis of Thomas' theology.

i Insights of Biblical Theology.

The question now is - "what insights do biblical theology and especially eschatology bring to these issues?" Thomas views eschatology as an "eschatological transfiguration" in which he draws on the ideas of Bishop K.H. Ting of China who asserts that

"What man achieves in history is not finally negated or destroyed but, in the new heaven and in the new earth, will be received in Christ and transfigured. 4

Here we see the influence of the text of Revelation 21:1-5 with the emphasis on the new heaven and the new earth coming ultimately as a gift of God. Thomas is heavily influenced by the theological ideas of the late Paul Devanandan, the former co-director at Bangalore's Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society.5 This is noted especially in the second aspect of Christ's

4 Thomas, M.M. The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, p.27

5 See Thomas M.M., "The Gospel and the Quest of Modern Asia" Union Seminary Quarterly Review, March, 1967, p.235f

action in the Asian revolution referred to earlier. Devanandan disagreed with the emphasis of eschatology suspended between what was done and what is to come. His position would be closer to the realized eschatology, "here and now" emphasis of the gospel of John. For reality in the present means living in an extension of the incarnation and in expectation of the second coming. This reality is present in mankind as well as the church with Devanandan stressing the social and cosmic dimensions in Christ. Although personal regeneration is acknowledged, the cosmic dimensions require emphasis, for man is called to accept his part in a "new order of being". It is important to point out that these biblical notions do not carry specific reference to the Scripture and it has been necessary for me to surmise their basis. At certain points however, Thomas is more explicitly biblical and he draws on Paul's conception of Christ in his letters to the Colossians, Ephesians and Romans. Here we find the emphasis of Christ's victory over the principalities and powers of the old age. Paul speaks in Romans of "the whole creation groaning in travail..." (Romans 8:22) and thus we gain a sense of the cosmic nature of the forces set at work by Christ's Lordship. The struggle for unification of all things under the Lordship of Christ is a key note of the Ephesian letter. The Church has been set in sacramental relation to world and nature, being the "first fruits of the Spirit" (Rom.8:23). Perhaps this is an appropriate time to turn our attention to the Church and more particularly to the life and mission of the Church. For the discussion on mission amidst revolution, it will also be

useful to examine how Thomas deals with the question of what it means to be human.

ii. The Church and the New Humanity

Thomas regards the Church as a sacramental sign of the Kingdom, but also sees the spirit of Christ operating outside the institutional church. Thus, the Kingdom of God cannot be too easily equated with the church. At this stage it is necessary to stress that the thought which has been developed up to now has not been divorced from mission of the church but is definitely linked with it. For instance, it was implicit in the way Thomas developed his ideas regarding the interpretation of God's action in history, that his overall framework for mission is:

- i) that the gospel stands over against all ideologies, political systems, idolatries, etc.;
- ii) that Jesus Christ is the source of redemption for the whole world; and
- iii) that Christ is engaged in a continuous dialogue with men and is present in the secular movements of history.

This framework is stressed by Thomas in his reply to H.H. Wolf's article, which indirectly compared his theology with the German Christians "new outpouring of the Spirit" in the Third Reich.⁶ Some of the most recent and creative thought of Thomas is found in the article entitled "The Gospel and the Quest of Modern Asia". Particularly his short summary of mission strategies and his assertion that the gospel message must be defined as:

⁶ see The Ecumenical Review, Jan 1966, p. 21P.

the good news of the new humanity of Jesus Christ as a message challengingly relevant to the deep human and spiritual aspirations of modern Asia, and as the source, criterion, redemption and fulfillment of the Asian revolution. 7

This quotation is not only very important to an understanding of the central "mission" concerns of M.M. Thomas but also it provides a definition which has many creative possibilities for further theological discussion and debate. The concern with the new humanity of Christ represents an additional aspect of the incarnation which has often been overlooked by classical theologians concerned only with atonement (or Christ's rescue of a sinful mankind). Of particular interest, is the lengthy reference made by Thomas to Justice P. Chenchiah, an Asian theologian of an earlier era, who has emphasized Christ as, the new Adam, the Son of Man, and has linked the incarnation with the resurrection. Chenchiah's thought came as a reaction to Kraemer's biblical emphasis on transcendence which seemed to place Jesus out of the creative process. Thomas continues this line of thought in the conclusion of the aforementioned article, by quoting Hendrikus Berkhof who has developed a strong biblical basis for his linking Jesus with creation, history and consummation in a refreshing new fashion. Berkhof has entitled this section of his article "Christ, the Mediator of Redemption and Creation". Jesus Christ, the new man, then becomes for Thomas the criteria for discerning action of the Christ in history. So in revolutionary situations, the Christian Church is called upon to discern what is human and inhuman

7 Thomas, M.M. "The Gospel and the Quest of Modern Asia", Union Seminary Quarterly Review, March 1967, p.233

or to find which are the dehumanizing elements and which are the factors making life more human. It was mentioned earlier how Christ was seen as making life more fully human in the revolution, thus the source of the revolution is found in Christ, the new man. For Christ is not only redeeming individuals but is also redeeming the social dimension of our society. The fulfillment of humanity, which we have seen in Jesus Christ, represents the goal of the revolution. Thus we can see how Thomas views the new humanity of Christ as the source, criterion, redemption and fulfillment of the Asian revolution. As we move on, let us consider his "implicit" theology as Thomas examines the cultural aspects of the revolution and its underlying ideology.

iii. Theology, Ideological Secularism and Social Change

Initially it should be pointed out that Thomas sees the renaissance of traditional religions and cultures along with the impact of the Christian missions, as the other main movements which are affecting contemporary Asian culture. Since Thomas is not a systematic theologian, it is somewhat difficult to follow his thought and use of terms as they appear in various articles and books. For instance, Thomas seems to equate the process of secularization and the "technique" of secularism in his thinking.⁸ In an article titled "Dynamic Secularism", he celebrates the feeling of political, social and educational institutions from religious control. Thomas recognizes that this process of undercutting and de-sacralizing of idolatrous institutions has paved the way for a new spiritual and cultural ethos. However, while this opening up of society has

⁸ See Taylor, R. and Thomas M.M., Mud Walls and Steel Mills, p.79

allowed much greater personal freedom and a framework for a pluralistic open society, it is not without its problems. His perception of these problems separates Thomas somewhat from many "secular theologians" who only see the liberating aspects of secularization. For secularization also brings difficulties in achieving national integration and integrity. Since the traditional basis of security is undercut by secularization, there are tendencies to retreat into narrow communal or religious loyalties as a response to these unsettling and disrupting new processes. With the challenge to traditional authority, there comes also a challenge to traditional sets of values with old patterns relativized and no new values to take their place. The result is a "crisis of spirit" with a vacuum in society being created by secularization and no new patterns of values, sense of identity or concept of community to take its place. To illustrate this point, I will use the cultural categories of Paul Tillich, namely that Asian culture has moved out of a "heteronomous" culture in which the authority was imposed on the individual from outside (through the family, the village community and the religious community). The next stage is an "autonomous" culture where individuals have rebelled from externally imposed authority but in the freedom of their new autonomy have found the uncertainty of unclear patterns of life or perhaps an obedience to reason alone. The result of these cultural changes now present the challenge of finding a new spiritual basis for the society. Thomas calls this a search for a "new spiritual foundation". He introduces the positive impact of secular humanism which places a high value on

human welfare and freedom. He does not find in secular humanism, however, an adequate answer for this new spiritual basis. What is needed for the whole Indian culture is a synthesis of the best elements of secularization with the deep-rooted beliefs and concepts of the Indian culture. Thomas feels that the Christian contribution must be to focus this spiritual foundation on more personal terms relating it to man's nature and destiny. Thus, while the synthesis now has a secular framework, it will have a dynamic open spiritual basis with this personal focus and content.⁹ Throughout most of his thinking on this subject, Thomas is careful to reject ideological secularism, that is, secularism as a faith which enslaves man in a "brutalizing worship" of nature and places full confidence in the historical processes themselves. He points here to the dangers of Communism and the extreme forms of scientism and materialism which often combine totalitarianism and traditional collectivism. The theological perspectives, in the framework of mission amidst social change, will be our next concern.

For we must now deal more fully with the question - "What is the role of theology in relation to social change?" The context of mission must be found on the basis of "participation" with non-Christians, in their struggles for a fuller human life and their quest to find a spiritual basis for society. This participation must be on the level of a real "partnership" with men of other faiths or atheists to build a better society. It is only through

⁹ See Thomas, M.M. The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution
p. 92

this real involvement that Christians will earn the right to be prophets. It is also only within this secular situation that Christians will be afforded opportunities for speaking their conviction that the gospel meets the deepest human and spiritual needs of man in revolution. This Christian "presence" must fulfill its prophetic role by showing it has a loyalty which transcends the loyalties to state and society. This prophetic role may well be to set up a "creative tension" in the political and economic struggles in which Christians find themselves. Thomas recognizes that these ideas are not without difficulties, for the Church has been isolated from the mainstream of national political life and often has been overly conscious of its minority position. He goes on to point to a needed change in the understanding of service. Here he suggests three guidelines, namely: i) a shift from Christian service institutions to Christian participation in educational, health and social spheres; ii) a move from charitable service activities only to more direct social action which challenges social structures; and iii) a ministry to the whole man in a society which compartmentalizes and fragments him through specialization. Thomas notes particularly in the social action aspect of ministry as being a hopeful new sign of the church in Asia. Following the influence of Gandhi, Thomas emphasizes non-violent methods of changing society. He emphasizes the effectiveness of moral persuasion and arousing a sense of justice. In a recent essay, "Politics and Development", Thomas sets down his ideas for social change in the wider framework of development for the Third World (Asia, Africa, and Latin America). In a rather vitriolic cry against the ideology

and power politics of the rich, he rejects the view

that the poor deserve to be poor; that any radical social change is Communist and must be opposed; that any State initiative or control of economic life is undemocratic - these and other exaggerations of half-truths are persisting elements of current American ideology and determine the relation of the richest nation to the third world. American policies in Latin America and South East Asia in recent years are an illustration of how far she is prepared to go to buttress this ideology with military might in international relations. 10

This "capitalist" ideology is for Thomas not untypical of the entire developed world. For Russia is also operating in a capitalist way vis a vis the third world. To counter this, we require a development ideology which embodies a universal moral appeal for justice and the self-interest of the poor nations. Thomas calls for a "political will" which emphasizes that poor nations encourage nationalism and take responsibility by trying to "stand up" rather than "catch up" to the rich nations. For Christians in the developed countries, all sorts of political pressure must be used to bring about structural changes and make world development a priority item. In all of this, Thomas asserts that we must discard the idols or "sacred cows" of every society and break free from these narrow loyalties in order to spearhead a thrust for universal human identity. Social change for Thomas thus involves a healthy combination of political realism and an ideological vision of a new world community. These comments on development direct our attention now to the revolutionary drives in Brazil and the theological response it has evoked.

C God's Presence in Messianic Movements - Richard Shaull.

10. Thomas, M.M. "Politics and Development", Risk Vol 1V, No. 2, 1968 p.38

The revolutionary thought of Richard Shaull gained international prominence at the Church and Society Conference of the World Council of Churches. Shaull emerged as an articulate spokesman of the revolutionary fervor of Latin America and of the radical younger generation. After spending some twenty years as a missionary in Brazil and Columbia, his theological thinking has been "forged on the anvil" of revolutionary situations. Perhaps the most controversial aspect of his speech at the conference was when he called Christians to "a new involvement, in those places in the world where God is most dynamically at work".¹¹ This prophetic concern to point to signs of God's activity in the world has been a consistent theological theme for Shaull. He asserts that this prophetic role can only be taken up by those who are actively committed and involved in the crucial struggles of our world. In an article entitled, "The Presence of God and the Human Revolution", Shaull in a rather measured and precise way develops his thinking in this regard. He notes the importance of a biblical basis, especially of Christ's Lordship of history, the action of the Holy Spirit, and the eschatological "breaking in" of the Kingdom of God. The argument records the uncertainty and the risks of pointing correctly to the presence of God. Then in a flurry of prophecy, Shaull affirms that:

The presence of God may be discerned most clearly at those points when the powers of the old order are being confronted by new messianic movements for human liberation i.e. in the midst of breakdown of old institutions, the eruption of conflict and violence, and the search for new solutions for our most pressing social problems. ¹²

¹¹ Shaull, R. "The Revolutionary Challenge to Church and Theology" Theology Today January, 1967 p.479

¹² Shaull, R., The Presence of God and the Human Revolution, McCormick Quarterly, January, 1967 p.101

This affirmation provides us with a basis for understanding Shaull's discernment of God's action in history (since he repeats this claim in several different books and articles) ¹³ This theological theme is noted in his first book Encounter with Revolution where, from the Brazilian context, he writes: "The Christian must strive at every point to see what God's will is for his time and then get to work at it". ¹⁴ At this point, it is perhaps unclear how all of this theological reflection relates to the Brazil situation. In our earlier examination of Brazil, we noted how various movements of students and workers were beginning to see their task in a revolutionary framework. It would then seem to be implicit in Shaull's earlier statement that where these movements were confronting the old power structures - there we will find the presence of God! Another factor implicit in Shaull's theology is the opening of a new way forward for Christian social ethics. For the church and individual Christians are called to join with God where he is "most dynamically" at work in the world. Shaull also recognizes the need for "new involvement" on the basis of concern for humanization and social justice. At a later stage, we will examine how this understanding of God at work in the world also relates to the doctrine of the Church.

i. Biblical Themes

Let us now turn to a intricately related question-what are the biblical themes which are helpful in our dialogue with society? For Richard Shaull, the greatest source of strength is drawn from

¹³ Shaull, R., Containment and Change, p. 219
 "Theology and Transformation of Society", Theology Today,
 April 1968, p.25

¹⁴ Shaull, R., Encounter with Revolution, p.67

biblical messianism set in an eschatological framework. It is the messianic images and movements of the Bible that provide us with the basis for understanding what is really going on in history and for directing the future of theological reflection. This theme is brought to the surface in an article entitled "Theology and the Transformation of Society" where Shaull tries to move beyond the political realism base set by the neo-orthodoxy of Reinhold Niebuhr. For Shaull this messianic humanism is intimately linked with biblical themes of Israel's expectation of a Messiah and the movement from the old Adam to the new Adam, Jesus Christ. It is important to note the influence which the Marxist philosopher Ernst Bloch and the radical Roman Catholic Teilhard de Chardin have had on Shaull. This can be seen in his shift of emphasis in an attempt to move in a new direction from Niebuhr:

The transcendent reality described in the biblical myths and images is not so much the God who stands above all human achievements, judging them and raising man to a higher order, but 'the God who goes ahead of us', opening the way for greater fulfillment on the road to the future. He is the one whose actions in the totality of man's history lead to new events that open new possibilities. 15

The transcendent God is thus seen in historical-eschatological terms as the God who is always ahead of us in the struggle for social transformation and personal fulfillment. The point of contact with contemporary struggles will come in the dialogue which will develop between secular Messianic movements and the Christian understanding of Messianism.

But what are the concrete signs of the Messianic movements?

15 Shaull, R. "Theology and the Transformation of Society" Theology Today, April 1968, p.27

In the book Containment and Change, Shaull refers to young Brazilians taking up the cause of the oppressed poor and to the rejection of patriarchal authority by peasants of Brazil. These movements though are met with the resistance of old powers - the feudal and colonial exploitation system of the ruling elite. At the points where confrontation takes place between these groups, there we will find God in a "messianic incognito" form. The framework of this messianism is the Kingdom of God which is at once standing over against our finite structural justice and is also breaking in upon us with a radical newness. This latter emphasis is very much in keeping with a theology of messianism where God is made manifest yet is also going ahead of us. The eschatological symbols which enable us to stand over against our systems of proximate justice are especially helpful in developing a revolutionary stance in relation to the status quo. Shaull notes the concern of the Old Testament writers for the coming Messiah and interprets the Magnificat in Luke to mean that Messiah was a political revolutionary. The theme of the Messiah's struggle with the principalities and powers of the old age is emphasized and related to the present power structures which try to be lords not servants. This messianic theme can provide a source of strength for those involved in a difficult and discouraging revolutionary situation. Shaull cites the fact that power structures must resort to force to keep their position as evidence of the instability of their position. This biblical-contemporary conversation comes home to us when Shaull addresses an encouraging word to the revolutionaries, that "the Christian symbols can suggest that crucifixion is victory

over the principalities and powers. In the context of sovereignty, the powerful are not as secure in their power as they would have us believe". ¹⁶ Jesus was a threat to the "establishment" and force was used to repress him. Yet he did not "capitulate" to their power. This provides a fairly clear example of how Shaull would relate the biblical passage Colossians 2:15 to the realities of present day sources of power. To show the dynamism of this messianic concern, Shaull is anxious to emphasize the biblical elements which point to the need for destroying old structures and building up new models. For instance, he would suggest that to understand social change biblically we must look to Jeremiah 1:10 where Yahweh says "Look, today I am setting you over nations and over kingdoms, to tear up and knock down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant." (Jerusalem Bible). This relates to the theme running through Shaull's writing that order will come on the other side of change. That is, he now opts for the priority of justice and the necessity of revolutionary change but order will be required in the post revolutionary period. The Christian understanding of crucifixion and resurrection also provide clues for understanding the present struggles. ¹⁷ They suggest that we need not be needlessly preoccupied with short-term results and thus are freed to get on with the revolution. For crucifixion and apparent failure are part of and yet also contribute to social transformation. This understanding of crucifixion and our resurrection hope frees us to

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 29

¹⁷ See Ogelsby, C. and Shaull, R. Containment and Change, p. 230f

carry on the struggle. These symbols are also helpful in relating to the New Left concern for "busting the mind" where the emphasis is put on new possibilities, new ideas and new vision of the social order. Shaull is thus suggesting a new way forward in the theological dialogue with contemporary secular movements. In this messianic theology, as it has been developed in this section, we can see how Shaull's theological ideas have a special relation to "revolutionary protest" and to the "social revolution".

ii. The Stance of the Church in Society

It is now important to examine how God's presence in history relates to the Christian community. How does the church come to understand its role in contemporary society? It is here that we note a shift in Shaull's writing as he came to view the church more radically as time went on. A common concern throughout has been to emphasize the prophetic role of discerning God's acts of judgment and mercy in the realities of the situation in which the church happens to find itself. Shaull has been quite critical of the churches' role in relation to revolutionary movements and has called for repentance and renewal. This would take the form of a new awareness of "what God is up to in history," especially as he is active in revolutionary movements for more human and just structures. However, he is not without hope for the contemporary Christian church. In Brazil, he notes how young Christians are meeting with new Left Marxists for study and action projects. It follows that if God is present in contemporary messianic movements, that is where the people of God must be also. A doctrine of the church begins where God is "most dynamically active" and not necessarily

with the institutional church. In a lecture at the Foyer John-Knox-House "Consumers or Revolutionaries?", Shaull called for a rediscovery of our sectarian church heritage which will enable us to stand over against the culture and its systems. Shaull felt the need for both local and international sectarian groups which would form the vanguard of the ecumenical movement. The institutional church must find room for these groups which will also be part of the secular revolutionary movements. It will be important to maintain the links between the groups working for radical change both in the Third World and the highly developed countries. These sectarian groups would stand on the fringe of the church challenging the church by its witness and its freedom for the future, by resisting the acculturation of the church. Shaull's biblical-historical base for this is that

"Theological reflection upon the church in eschatological perspective points to it as the sign and first fruits of the new humanity, a community called to make visible in the world the new future now becoming reality in the present". 18

Thus we find Shaull drawing on past examples of church life as a clue for establishing new forms of Christian community.

iii. Theological Interaction with Social Change and Revolutionary Ideology.

The task of these radical Christian groups in the midst of secular movements will involve both theological reflection and action. Thus we come to the question of the role of theology in relation to social change and ideology. Shaull notes the essential role played by ideology in social change since it devises goals and

18 Shaull, R. "Theology and Transformation of Society", Theology Today, April, 1968, p. 35

programmes of action. It provides a way of looking at history along with an assessment of the concrete economic and social conditions. Shaull favors a re-thinking of our evaluation of the changing forms of communism and a rekindled appreciation of Marxism as a tool of analysis, an impetus to change, and a social theory. He is not unaware of the limitations of the Marxist ideology but calls for a sensitivity to new chances for dialogue and common commitment for social justice and human betterment. These ideas are readily applicable in the Brazilian situation. But what is the relation of theology to a world fraught with conflicting ideologies? Shaull asserts that "Theological reflection on history will be most relevant to the ideological struggle when it is willing to become something of an ideology itself". ¹⁹ Shaull understands ideology as the set of goals and strategies which contribute to the social transformation of history. This ideological formulation is better than falling prey to the hidden ideological ethos of the existing system. The positive contribution of theology to the ideological struggle will come with the theologians' attempt to keep the ideology "open" to new possibilities and to seeing reality in a new way. Shaull would relate this to the eschatological framework emphasis mentioned earlier and has called for a rediscovery of Christian signs of "transcendence and transgression" over against present limitations. Again he is searching for a new way forward.

Shaull is also helpful in presenting strategies of action in the political arena of social change. He is careful to root his thought in the realities of a technological society where the exist-

¹⁹ Ogelsby, C. and Shaull, R. Containment and Change, p. 227

ing economic and political power structures have buttressed their positions through the use of new technological means. Herbert Marcuse's, One Dimensional Man, which attempts to document this thesis of technological alignment with power structures, has been very influential in Shaul's thinking. ²⁰ On the world scene, Shaul notes how the United States and Russia have this overwhelming technological power which is now being threatened by the revolutionary "Third World". It is the techniques of the revolutionary southern hemisphere that are most applicable to our new situation. The action strategy must utilize the methods of guerilla warfare. For Brazilians, this would likely involve such military and political strategy as developed in the Cuban revolution. Violence or the threat of violence may be the only way to bring change in Brazil. For those in the developed countries, the "political equivalent to guerilla warfare" ²¹ would mean that small groups maintaining a flexibility of confrontation and action that would put intense pressure on various sensitive points in the system. Both struggles are aimed at developing structures in society which are open and flexible to the changing needs of humanity. In the midst of this revolutionary involvement, the Christian role would be to keep the operating ideology open and to develop an awareness among the revolutionaries of the importance of reconciliation with the enemy. Thus one can see theology's important link with ideology and social change.

iv. The New Man

Before we complete this section, it is important to comment

²⁰ See Shaul, R. "The Revolutionary Challenge to Church and Theology" Theology Today, January, 1967

²¹ Shaul, R. Containment and Change, p. 239

on Shaul's understanding of the "human". He places much emphasis on the humanizing activity of God and man in the world (here we note the influence of Paul Lehmann and Dietrich Bonhoeffer). Shaul emphasizes personal fulfillment of the individuals with stress on the development of self-awareness and meaningful participation in the important spheres of society. A future-oriented individual with a sense of creativity and imagination for new possibilities, will also be key elements. But this is not possible without a social transformation in which the economic and political structures are made to serve man and be open to his changing needs. As we have now moved into many areas which are directly affected by technological change, it is perhaps appropriate that we move on and consider the thought of Harvey Cox.

D. God's Kingdom and the Secular City - Harvey Cox

The Secular City has provided many with a new direction in theology and has established Harvey Cox as one of the refreshing radical theologians of the "sixties". Cox's book touched off a minor explosion and the ripples of controversy have not yet reached calm waters. Cox is keen to reflect on the question - how is God active in the dynamic movements of history? This is seen most clearly in the chapter of his book which is titled "Towards a Theology of Social Change". He feels that the symbol of the secular city provides the real clue to understanding the Kingdom of God and to building a theology of social change. He develops the argument that the question of Christology must be the key for understanding

the Kingdom of God because Jesus is the central sign. The fathers of the church affirmed that Jesus was fully man and fully God, that is, involving both God's action and man's response. The argument is summed up with the claim that:

"The Kingdom of God, concentrated in the life of Jesus, remains the fullest possible disclosure of the partnership of God and man in history. Our struggle for the shaping of the secular city represents the way we respond faithfully to this reality in our own times" 22

The secular city then, is the secular sign of the Kingdom as it embodies God's action in contemporary history. For Cox, the secular city represents the dynamic fusion of the forces of urbanization and secularization. Earlier in the book he developed the thesis, that the historical and cultural movement from tribe to town to city represented a gradual process of de-mythologizing and shedding various idolatries that develop. Cox proceeds to defend his thesis of the link between the emerging secular city and the action of God - "this reality in our own times". He acknowledged the needed neo-orthodox correction to the social Gospel movement but asserts that his theology does not have the social gospel emphasis on man's building of the Kingdom. Cox feels that the repentance called by the impending Kingdom is not moralistic but is rather a call for setting aside old loyalties. Finally, he places the emphasis on the Kingdom breaking in upon us rather than either futuristic or realized eschatology. With this basis, Cox carries through on the practical implications of his radical assertions.

22. Cox, H. The Secular City, p. 112

In an earlier book, God's Revolution and Man's Responsibility, Cox was even more confident of discerning God's action in contemporary movements. On the basis of God's anointing of the pagan King Cyrus as his servant (Isaiah 45), so we also see God raising up his "pagan" servants in our day. Cox outlined the revolutions of our age: the anticolonial; the scientific; the racial; and the peace revolutions. Then he finishes with the affirmation that "God is in all those revolutions!" ²³ As with Shaul, this proclamation of where God is active becomes a call for the Christian to participate in this dynamic movement of history. But how do all of these theological concepts relate to the case study of Boston? The implication of Cox's earlier statement, that the secular city provides the symbol of God's Kingdom, is that God is active in the secularization and urbanization which is taking place in Boston. God is present in the spheres of Boston's life where men are being brought from bondage to liberation for a greater exercise of freedom and responsibility. God's involvement in history, is also described by Cox as a floating "crap game" and that the church is challenged to go "where the action is". Thus we can see Cox's predominant concern to interpret God's action in historical events and more particularly those occurring in the city.

i. Biblical Eschatology

Although we have already begun to look at this issue, let us now concentrate on the biblical basis of Cox's theology with

²³ Cox, H. God's Revolution and Man's Responsibility, p. 32

a special emphasis on eschatology. In The Secular City, Cox emphasized the fact that God's Kingdom is "in the process of realizing itself" and that Jesus is the central sign. This position is acknowledged by Cox as being primarily influenced by Amos Wilder's book, Eschatology and Ethics in the Teaching of Jesus. In several of his later books, Cox pushes these questions a bit further. One of his consistent themes is that we must free our biblical thinking from the Greek philosophic underpinning, which utilizes a dualistic understanding of matter and spirit. Cox calls for a rediscovery of Hebrew thinking with the emphasis on man as a unified entity rooted in the earthiness of this world. Perhaps even more important is the emphasis on the Hebrew expectation of an open future which again stood in contrast to Greek thought. Not only is Cox unhappy about the synthesis with Greek theology, but he notes with displeasure the influence in Christianity of apocalypticism which is negative and anti-worldly. It is not these two perspectives that will meet the challenge of the future, rather it is the Hebraic prophetic perspective. He notes the prophetic emphasis on the promises of Yahweh and the covenant requirements of repentance, change, and responsibility for the future. He notes how the coming of Jesus has widened the offer of these promises to everyone. This Hebraic concept stands in stark contrast to the perspective of the Greek Gentile world (Ephesians 2:12). Perhaps the key to this line of thought is this assertion by Cox :

For prophecy, as the Jews have almost succeeded in teaching the rest of us, the Messiah is always the one who will come. Man is not God. Since he cannot

abolish his own freedom, he cannot terminate history. Therefore all his politics must be informed by a bold provisionality. 24

Cox is extremely helpful in a word study of the Hebrew word "shalom" in God's Revolution and Man's Responsibility. The eschatological perspective of shalom is in the context of the new era of God's Kingdom. While shalom is translated "peace" in English, it involves really something much more embodying justice, earthly wholeness and new relationships - a social happening! This new kingdom is described in Isaiah 65:17f as the "new heavens and new earth". The coming Messiah is depicted as the bearer of shalom (Isaiah 9). Shalom is then picked up in the New Testament as Cox interprets the Greek word for peace "eirene" as meaning shalom. Especially in the Pauline letters, we note that shalom embodies three important elements: i) reconciliation; ii) freedom; and iii) hope. Reconciliation is a key note in 2 Corinthians 5:17-18 and Ephesians 2:13-15 with the emphasis on God's gift of shalom breaking down the various divisions and alienations of the world. An important phase of the Pauline concept of freedom is the liberation from principalities and powers of the old age. The eschatological future emphasis is seen in the hope for a universal kingdom of shalom. Shalom thus embodies both the earthly aspects of God's reign and the goals of the Kingdom which are to be understood eschatologically. Throughout it is important to see Cox's concern to develop a biblical foundation for his radical new concepts.

24 Cox, H. On Not Leaving it to the Snake, p. 45

ii. A New Stance for the Church

We are now led to the question - Is there a new basis for the churches' stance and action regarding a radical transformation of society? For Cox, an understanding of the doctrine of the Church must begin with the discernment of where God is preceeding us in the world. Our task is to participate in the ministry of Jesus Christ especially as He conceives that ministry in Luke 4:18, that is the kerygma, the diakonia and the koinonia. The church's role in society is to be the avant-garde of God's new regime. It must proclaim that God's liberating force from the powers of the old age has begun and that man is called to take responsibility in the secular city - this is the kerygma. Diakonia of the church happens where it participates in the healing and reconciliation of the city. In our earlier examination of the sociological issues which were key to Boston's life, we saw the enormous difficulties of conflicts between various groups in the city. As the church exercises its diakonia (servant) ministry, it must be concerned both to restore the broken relationships between these groups and to seek social justice. Cox cites three key aspects of the fight to overcome the problem of the city, namely: i) the lack of centralized political structures to deal with the problem; ii) the failure to understand these city problems from a society-wide perspective; and iii) the voicelessness of the poor and oppressed groups of the city. These will be key issues for the diakonate and its mission. Cox points out how the Woodlawn Organization of Chicago, by using Saul Alinsky's community-organizing tactics, has gone a long way in developing a power base for the oppressed

Negroes. Woodlawn has become a sign of the Kingdom of Cox, as it has caused men to take responsibility for their community and their rights. The task of the church also involved koinonia - or "fellowship". The church is called to be a sign of the Kingdom, where there are no barriers between the various ethnic and racial groups of the city. Thus the church can become a symbol of hope in the midst of chaos and thus gain authenticity for its proclamation and service. These three aspects of the church's task come together in the traditional role of cultural exorcist. Here the role is to expose for scrutiny the myths and behavior patterns of the culture. It will involve a renewed examination of God's activity and a sense of a special mission to the neighborhood. An example would be the Blue Hill Community Church:

The Blue Hill Community Church in Boston's Roxbury district specializes in work with people involved in the Negro freedom movement. Its entire program, including choir, Sunday service, youth program and adult education, is geared into this effort.²⁵

Here the "racist" tribal or town myths of the culture would be challenged through a study of African history. From all that has preceded, one can see that Cox is seeking, in a radical way, to rediscover the biblical demands on the church and the issues of modern urban society. At a later stage, Cox wrote a creative article titled "The Church and the Future", in which he saw the church of the future taking shape. As a new style of life, he forecasted that "political" obedience to Christ to make life human would be the sign of true apostolicity. As to the goals of mission, he says:

²⁵ Cox, H. The Secular City, p. 159

Our main focus of concern should be the restoration of man to his manhood, the restoration of community, and the reconstruction of the bent world to a fully human place... If we devote our energies to this humanizing mission, we are directly engaged in the work of God, and he will take care of the renewing life of his people .26

Thus Cox has explained his vision of the relationship between the renewal of society and the renewal of the church.

iii. Theology, Marxist Ideology and Social Change

Renewal of society brings us directly to our next question - what is the role of theology in relation to ideology and rapid social change? We have already noted the role of theology in the encounter with an underlying tribal and town mythology of society. (the church as cultural exorcist) Cox notes how mythology often forms part of the underlying ideological ethos of western democracies. Cox develops the biblical sources of secularization and examines how the biblical accounts relate to their cultural surroundings, namely:

creation story - demythologizing nature worship

exodus from Egypt - desacralizing politics (civil disobedience)

covenant - relativizing human idols.

This biblical understanding underlies his approach to cultural and political systems and therefore his approach to their ideological basis. In relation to ideology and social change, I think it will be helpful to examine Cox's writing on the Christian - Marxist dialogue as they will be key partners for discussion on the revolutionary frontiers. In his latest book, On Not Leaving It To

26 Cox, H. On Not Leaving it to the Snake, p.147

The Snake, Cox notes how there is now a new climate for dialogue with Marxists in Italy, France, Germany and Czechoslovakia. Cox sees the focus for the dialogue in the issues of evolution and hope, as they are raised by the Roman Catholic de Chardin and by the Marxist, Bloch. From the Marxist side of the dialogue, there is growing recognition that man's alienation does not vanish with the abolition of private property. Similarly Christians are discovering that the Marxists are often the only group in society that is seeking radical social change for more just conditions. Perhaps the key to Cox's theological approach to the Marxist ideology is:

The young Marxists who roam the cafes of Prague in search of dialogue are not interested in some sort of theological me-too-ism. They are looking for Christians who take them seriously, as thinkers and as human beings, who will criticize their position relentlessly, explicate their own point of view clearly, and listen to the Marxist position with neither arrogance nor ingratiation. 27

In relation to the issues of social change, Cox admits frankly that a theology of social change must be put at the top of the agenda for our reflection. As we have already seen this should be based on what God is now doing in the world. Cox is quite conscious of the rapid social change and revolutionary movements which are occurring in the "Third World". A basic clue in understanding the ideas of Cox in relation to change is seen in his explication of man's sin. Cox's position is that man's most grievous sin is not so much pride as it is sloth. By reflecting

27 Cox, H. On Not Leaving It To The Snake, p. 74

on the Genesis accounts, it would appear that Eve allowed the snake to tell her what to do. By abdicating our responsibility for making decisions and have dominion over the earth, man is committing the sin of sloth. In contemporary terms, men are caught up in the passive sins of apathy and sloth when they allow others to make significant political or economic decisions for them. Cox calls for an awakening to this fact and a refusal to let the "snakes" (powers of the old age) tell us what to do! This means a new sense of political responsibility - for both the non-voting slum dweller in Boston and the M.I.T. scientist, who takes no social responsibility for the weapons he designs. Cox feels that preaching can play an important part in social change. But the preaching must be specific and point to signs of the Kingdom in the city of Boston! Thus the reality of God's Kingdom will lead the slum dweller and the scientist to repent and "wake up" to their new political apostleship. Thus the inter-relatedness of these various themes in Cox's theology take on new dimensions.

iv What Does it Mean to be Human?

As we turn to the question of what it means to be human, we note how the qualities of "humanness" relate to change, especially technological change. Cox is very concerned in reflecting the style of life which will be needed by men in the future society. Coming up from his basic conception that man is called to exercise responsible stewardship in God's creation, we can see various themes developing. Through the writings of St. Paul we are called to "put away childish things". Cox too emphasizes the

quality of maturity needed to deal with the complex issues of our era. Maturity would include such attributes as responsibility, creativity and spontaneity. The cybernetic revolution will have men doing less work. Can we develop a mature ethic of leisure? Television and films have tremendous possibilities for influencing the great masses of society. The challenge goes forth encouraging creative and responsible use of these mediums. Human maturity and restraint are required with modern weapons, for man stands at the brink of nuclear catastrophe. In this new era, maturity will be marked by originality and an acceptance of provisional structures. The problems of the future are so unique that original and not past solutions must be our guide. With the rapid movement of events and the changing of conditions, we must be ready to create provisional patterns for ordering life in society. One cannot miss Cox's overwhelming sense of enthusiasm and joy for the new opportunities and challenges which God is bringing to man. This joy must be incorporated in a new style of life. The sense of expectancy for man's future liberation is related to man's trust in God's reign in history for

"The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is also the Lord of technological man. He holds in his hand a future for this technological man far richer and more brilliant than anything we have yet imagined". 28

For Cox then, to be human means to grapple with the facts of our modern era and to develop the maturity with which we may understand and use them.

28 Munby, D., Economic Growth in World Perspective, p. 192

Thus we have come to the end of the recording of these theological reflections in the troubled waters of revolution. It has been possible to see certain lines of agreement in the theological perspectives. On the other hand, there are points of contention among these theologians. Before selecting and highlighting a few key theological perspectives on revolutions, it will be helpful to undertake a critical evaluation of the theological concepts of Thomas, Shaul and Cox. This evaluation should move the theological encounter one step further and allow consideration of new elements in the dialogue on the frontiers of revolutionary change.

CHAPTER III

THEOLOGY OF REVOLUTION - AN EVALUATION

A Key Questions for a Critique

Our task at this stage is to continue the conversation between contemporary events and our biblical-theological heritage. The evaluation will call for the raising of critical questions, a refinement of the arguments, and a purging of excess baggage. For in proclaiming God's action in revolutionary movements, these theologians are developing a theology of revolution. This thesis must be probed with the critical theological tools which we have at our disposal. The focus for the evaluation will be around several central questions, namely:

- i Does historical reflection provide a basis for examining this contemporary theology? (the light shed on theologizing by previous events and examples from history)
- ii Does a theology of revolution remain true to the biblical heritage?
- iii Are there other theological perspectives which will illuminate the current discussion?
- iv Does secular social thinking provide a correction on our theology?

Through these questions, we may find a new direction in our theological adventure with revolution.

B M.M. Thomas - A Critical Evaluation

May I begin with a few words of commendation for M.M. Thomas as I am very appreciative of the clarity of his presentations and the strength of his theological ideas. Thomas has opened my eyes to the extent to which we have to learn from one another in the ecumenical movement. The strength of the following which Thomas has in Asia and elsewhere speaks more loudly than what I can say about the importance of his ideas. However, we must begin our evaluation with the question - does historical reflection provide a basis for evaluating the theology of Thomas?

i Historical

Of special importance in evaluating the work of Thomas is his assessment of the historical process of secularization. The other related aspect of his writing which is the cause of concern to me is the call for a new spiritual basis of society. This new spiritual foundation would come as the result of a synthesis of the best elements of secularization with the deeply embedded elements of belief in the culture. While Thomas has confidence that Christ is in the midst of current struggles by constantly transforming the culture, is there not a problem that the Church will easily slip into the position where it loses the prophetic dimension and Christ is seen as inherently the same as the culture? In that instance, the Church becomes nothing more than a pale, pious reflection of the culture. I have the feeling also that Thomas is prone to see primarily the positive aspects of secularization and rapid social change, without maintaining a more biblical

dialectic position seeing both positive and negative aspects. His failure to more clearly distinguish between secularization and secularism confirms to a certain extent this feeling. This last point of mine reflects more of what I consider to be Thomas' general approach to these questions than his specific comments in this regard.

It is here that several other Orthodox theologians writing out of the Indian context are quite helpful. In the preparatory volume for the Church and Society Conference, Man in Community, C. I. Itty notes the secularization can easily develop ideological characteristics. He notes the importance of values which transcend the culture and also relate to it. Itty then

asserts: "A culture which is not open to the spiritual experiences and values of man becomes a closed culture and betrays its true secular character; secularization then becomes an absolutist ideology". 1

Thomas sees the need for a spiritual foundation for the culture but really misses the dangers of secularization slipping into secularism. Father Paul Verghese, writing in the same volume is more critical of much of the current discussion on secularization. Verghese calls for a "pluralistic, human community" placing stress on the values of freedom, love and wisdom which can only be ultimately wrought through the power of the Holy Spirit. These theologians, who spring from the same culture and tradition as Thomas, seem a good deal more sensitive to the ideological dangers of secularization and the cultural absorption of the church.

1 de Vries, E. Man in Community, p. 322

Thomas would do well to consider again their challenges.

ii. Biblical

It is somewhat difficult to know where to begin in presenting a biblical evaluation of the writings of Thomas. My feeling is that Thomas simply does not develop a strong enough biblical basis for what he is saying! When one attempts to run parallels between what has happened through God's revelation as found in the Bible and what is now happening in contemporary history - one must not neglect the primary task of examining what the Bible says. This task involves:

- i) a historical-critical examination of the text;
- ii) a consideration of the situation; and
- iii) a thorough exegesis of the passages concerned.

This must not be forgotten if we are to hear what Christ says to us in our situation. I get the impression that Thomas is not much interested in these biblical tasks. In his books and articles, with the possible exception of his article The Christian Confession in the Asian Revolution, he does not give specific biblical references. This means that even those who are living in the same Asian setting, are not able to reflect on the specific biblical passages as the basis for a judgment on the contemporary situation. When Thomas talks of man's freedom and the possible abuse of that freedom, it would be helpful to relate this more concretely to the second and third chapter of Genesis. This is the strength of the book by Hendrikus Berkhof entitled Christ the Meaning of History. For instance, Berkhof uses the term "antichrist" and analyses the

biblical meaning and foundation of the word.² Thomas, on the other hand, when he uses the word either assumes people understand this concept or explains it in a rather general manner.³ It would have also been interesting and likely added fresh insights to compare the judging of the Church with its "Western gospel" by the vehicle of nationalism, with the prophecy of Jeremiah that Babylon will be the instrument for punishing the wayward people of God. (of Jeremiah 25:1-14). Without this biblical orientation, it proves difficult in a theological way for laymen and ministers in the Asian Churches to reflect on and grapple with what he is saying. With the more specific biblical basis, however, these ideas could very well be used in group bible study and discussion periods. Dangers also arise for those who read these books and are caught up in the fervor of the ideas yet do not have the same discriminating and balanced approach that Thomas has.

In fairness to Thomas, I must point out that he does develop in a much better fashion his understanding of Christ as found in Paul's letters to the Colossians, Ephesians and Romans.⁴ He is quick to see the relevance for our day of Christ victorious over the principalities and powers. Similarly, the new humanity of Christ is both biblical and extremely relevant in our time. Is there not a danger here, though, in drawing primarily on these important concepts of biblical theology and missing other equally important christological aspects of the biblical message? It is

² See p. 113f Berkhof, H. Christ the Meaning of History

³ See p. 25 Religion and Society April, 1961

⁴ See p. 5 Religion and Society June, 1959

at this stage that I feel H.H. Wolf's criticism of Thomas really hits home when he says

"The 'promises of Christ' can be understood only in the light of Christ himself, and in him; they must be constantly rediscovered by listening to his word, and from the life of the Church"5

In the light of this really fundamental point made by Wolf we should also raise the questions; "are we turning the incarnate Christ into an idea of Christ?" - and "are we allowing contemporary events to shape the gospel message?" I disagree with Wolf's position that Christ's action remains completely hidden, even from the eyes of faith, but on this fundamental biblical challenge I feel compelled to agree with him. Wolf also presents the Barthian challenge that the "real questions" coming out of the revolution must be submitted to Christ and transformed, for they may not be the right questions to ask. Essentially, I feel we must place ourselves under the Scriptures, in the sense that we must continually try to rediscover really who Christ is, in the light of the witness of the first Christians! Wolf has indeed developed a strong critique of Thomas.

At this stage, I would like to introduce several ideas which are brought out in the book Faith in a Secular Age by Colin Williams. In this book there is an excellent section on an understanding of the transcendence of Christ as a "breaking through from below" - with Christ continually transcending what were considered to be the "limits of human existence."6 These ideas

5 H.H. Wolf, "Christ at Work in History". (Ecumenical Review, Dec. '66, p. 13)

6 See p. 79-88 Williams, Colin Faith in a Secular Age.

must be put forward in light of the favorable treatment Thomas gave the ideas of Chenchiah who saw no necessity for the transcendence of Christ. On this particular point, I feel that Thomas by using Chenchiah alongside a more biblical theologian such as Berkhof is really a bit confused or at least unclear as to his own position. Berkhof for instance, uses the phrase "a glorified humanity, in full communion with God" which implies something quite different from the position of Chenchiah. In addition to his helpful ideas on transcendence, Williams makes a rather significant point that

"we must see the world and what Christ is doing in it in light of the cross before we attempt to see it in light of the resurrection"7

We must reflect on that statement and then relate it to what Thomas says. Are there not elements of danger present when such a heavy stress is placed on the "triumphant" images of Christ found in Ephesians and Colossians? Is there not a subtle problem here failing really to see, with full seriousness, the crucifixion of Christ and going too quickly to the resurrection. The lectures of Prof. Bonnard at the Ecumenical Institute last winter, on Matthew 13:3-17, are helpful in this regard, where the problem of evil and of failures is seen, yet dialectically there are newness and victory even in those failures. The seminar discussions at the Institute relate to this concern as well, with a Brazilian pastor saying that the Christ he knew was the crucified Christ, who cried out from the cross, just as the poor and oppressed cry out in his country for bread and social justice. Both Latin

7 Williams, Colin, Faith in a Secular Age, p. 96

America and India have these same starving and oppressed people. So in proclaiming the resurrection Christ, as the Lord of history, we must never forget the actions of sinful men in bringing about the crucifixion. Our resurrection hope must be proclaimed but not at the expense of the crucifixion realism. Thomas does claim to see the "tragedy of the cross" and the tragic dimensions of life but there would seem to be a danger that he may be inclined to have a blurred vision of the cross. Could he not look at the Indian scene through the "eyes of the crucified Christ" and perhaps see there the judgment of God on the "national" and international structures of society that keep so many people poor and oppressed? (cf. Matthew 25:34-40).

I have tried to develop this argument to show that continual study and reassessing of positions in the light of the Bible, will lend fresh insights to the Christ we proclaim. Also on a second level, it is my feeling that Thomas must look again at the aspects of transcendence and crucifixion of the incarnate Christ. It would seem that, in some sense, Thomas has cut down the wholeness of the gospel message about Christ. Certainly he is taking the situation of the Indian culture seriously. The promises of a resurrected Lord must be proclaimed to people in a Hindu ethos, who see man in a cyclic round of reincarnations. The radical newness of the gospel for them is the resurrection, for this makes their life much more significant. It is clear this message has tremendous relevance for the mission of the Church, but it must never be forgotten that the gospel says more than this!

iii. Theological

The next question on the agenda is - "are there other theological perspectives which will illuminate the current discussion?" At this point, I would like to refer to the excellent Ph.D. dissertation done for Yale University (1963) by Bengt Runo Hoffman titled "Indian Protestant and Orthodox Social Ethics, 1947-62." Hoffman is concerned to examine the theme of God's action in the contemporary revolution of secular history. He notes that this affirmation is related both to the "cosmic" Christ who has affinity to all creation through signs of his presence and to the "redeeming" Christ, who transforms man's efforts, acting in discontinuity with creation. We have noted that Thomas emphasizes the redemption of Christ as necessary or there will be a betrayal of the revolution. Hoffman notes the danger in Indian social ethics of replacing the church and its kerygma with an intellectual, theological system. For many, this will be the reaction to the empirical reality of the church and its many failures. This danger of replacing the church with theology also relates to the key theme of God's action in history. Hoffman asserts that, in maintaining these two themes of the cosmic Christ and the redeeming Christ, Indian social ethicists tend to opt for the former. There is emphasis on God's action in sociological realities which are outside the Christian sphere. This has obvious advantages in enabling a "relevance" to current struggles. But in striving for the relevance, the theologian

"has in fact taken a theological stance concerning God's presence in India's socio-political

history which he may eventually wish to render less theoretically unequivocal than it appears at the moment" 8

In my estimation, Thomas is not entirely free from these dangers which Hoffman mentions. We must now consider the light which secular thought may shed on the theologizing of Thomas.

iv Secular.

From a secular point of view, there is one essential question which must be raised in this connection. Thomas feels that men of Asia, more than ever before, are confronted with the choice to decide for or against Christ. In one sense, because I do not live in Asia, perhaps I'm not competent to comment here. However, in so far as the secularizing process affects everyone and we are all "secular" men, perhaps it will be possible here to raise a few problems which I see. It has been my experience that most people really are not aware of any choice to decide for Christ or for the antichrist. People more likely do not make any decision but rather accept life as it is given and usually fall prey to a implicit faith in the cultural and historical ethos where they are situated. Perhaps by this quiet submission to the "prevailing faith", a decision is really made. I would see a large majority of the people therefore in an apathetic position, with only a distinct minority who make a conscious decision for or against Christ. It is now necessary to move on from this evaluation to a consideration of the thought of Richard Shaull.

8 Hoffman, B.R. Indian Protestant and Orthodox Social Ethics,

C Richard Shaull - A Critical Evaluation

There can be little doubt, that Richard Shaull brought the question of revolution squarely into the realms of ecumenical thought and has engendered a Christian appreciation of revolutions. In a refreshing way Shaull opened up a whole new area of theological endeavor. He has taken up the prophetic calling and sought to interpret history through the eyes of faith. It is not my intention to question Shaull's right to interpret history. Rather I would like to examine how and what he has interpreted as God's action in history. This examination will involve both historical and biblical questions. Let us turn first to the question - does historical reflection provide a basis for examining Shaull's theology? I believe it does, and I will show how.

i. Historical

If one thing is clear in history, it must surely be that movements and events manifest themselves morally in an ambiguous fashion. History provides us with many examples. What at one moment appeared to be a wonderful blessing, may well turn out to be quite demonic. One need only recall that Hitler's Nazi party in Germany was originally interpreted as the new outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Yet it was later seen as belonging to the demonic forces of the anti-Christ. Similarly today we find the South African apartheid policies of racialism justified on the understanding that this is God's ordering of society. This dangerous sanctifying of movements, which are anti-human in their core, should make us extremely wary of making our judg-

ments too unequivocal. It must temper our assessments of God's action in history and make them more tentative. This demonic element also holds true for the revolutions which have occurred in history. If one looks at the Russian revolution especially in the Stalinist period one must surely note the tendency to absolutize ideological positions. At this particular stage the Russian revolution, through its inhuman methods, was actually destroying much of what it set out to accomplish. These dangers of absolutizing and hardening positions do not only occur after the revolution has taken place. For if one is to look at the recent revolution in France, it is clear that forces are set loose within the revolutionary movement that are difficult to control. While the police initiated the violent repression, the incidents of violence began to snowball setting loose anarchic forces, which hurt the revolutionary cause in its desire to win popular support. Thus revolutions have demonic elements even in the dynamism of the movement. One must admit the fact, while also seeing that the revolution in France stood squarely on the side of justice for the majority of society. Another historical factor that must be considered is the tendency of revolutions to develop self-justification for their goals and methods which are often self-righteous and very destructive. While the reports are somewhat conflicting, the recent cultural revolution in China may well provide an example of this self-justifying phenomenon. The thread of historical truth which runs throughout this argument is that revolutionary movements hold within them the "seeds"

of forces which can negate or betray the goals of the revolution. Since man's nature has not been transformed into a perfect state, we must also recognize that men involved in contemporary revolutionary movements will also be subject to a betrayal of the revolution. On this basis, we should be extremely wary of too easily identifying God's present action in history with revolutionary movements. It is here that we must take issue with Shaul's too unequivocal statements that the presence of God can be viewed most clearly at the points where messianic movements confront power structures. Even at this point of confrontation, we have seen how there can often be demonic and dehumanizing forces at work. There is, then, real room for doubt as to the clear manifestation of God at work. Perhaps at this point Shaul reveals his Calvinist Presbyterian background. Historically Calvinists have yielded to the temptation of seeing clearly God's hand at work, where there were many different forces involved.

ii. Biblical

As we turn now to biblical questions, let us continue with an examination of the action of God in "messianic" movements. If we are to speak of messianic movements in a biblical way, it is necessary to reflect on the biblical Messiah. Shaul makes the assertion that Jesus, the Messiah, was a political revolutionary figure. It is clear that this young man, Jesus, with his radical message directly threatened the religious establishment. His message and action were to set loose forces in history that indirectly threatened the political powers of

Palestine. These religious and political power structures combined to have Jesus crucified. Are we justified, though, in going that next step and saying that Jesus was a political revolutionary? For Jesus seems to have rejected the overtly political role of a Jewish zealot. Similarly Jesus never openly claimed to be the Messiah in Matthew, Mark or Luke. Thus we are thrust into the key questions of Christology as we examine messianism. Perhaps it will be useful to examine the action of Jesus in the temple when he overturned the tables of the money lenders. (cf Mk. 15-19, Mt. 21: 12-17, Lk. 19:45-48, Jn.2:14-16). This money changing and selling pigeons (cf Mark) was contrary to the temple being a house of joyful prayer for all peoples (Isaiah 56:7). Jesus seems to have committed violent acts in throwing out these men from the house of Lord. Yet he did these acts alone and was ready to accept retaliation. His concern was to reform the quality of life in the church which was called to be the first fruits of the Kingdom. Obviously that would have an impact on the secular financial circles but this was not his primary concern. The question must now be raised - would not a "political revolutionary" both have different central concerns and utilize a more powerful manner of change? Would not a political revolutionary be concerned to change the whole economic and political system with the support of a guerilla band? Thus while the figure of Jesus as a political revolutionary is very relevant to our present struggles, it would not seem to do justice to the "biblical" Jesus. After saying this, nevertheless, we must ack-

knowledge the increasing recognition among scholars of the important role played by the "political" authorities, that is, the Romans, in the crucifixion. 9

Another aspect of this question, is the movement from the First Adam to the Second Adam which Shaull refers to as a central New Testament theme. 10 There can be no doubt that for our day, the discovery of this theme of the new humanity of Jesus is a key aspect of the good news. Theologians are noting the too exclusive emphasis on Christ's redemptive atonement. In an excellent biblical study "God in Nature and History" Hendrikus Berkhof points out this traditional emphasis on the atonement does not do justice to the emphasis of these biblical passages (John 1, Colossians 1, Hebrews 1) on Christ as the agent of creation, the new Adam. 11 It is important for us to see that both new creation in Christ and the atonement are motives for the incarnation. However, Shaull takes too much liberty with biblical theology, to accord this dynamic movement from first to second Adam as "the" central New Testament theme.

This loose biblical thinking is also evidenced in Shaull's treatment of various Old Testament books. An example would be his treatment of Isaiah:

"In the atmosphere of revolution, the Messiah is the central figure. He arises after the house of David has been destroyed, as a shoot

9 See Winter, Paul On The Trial of Jesus

10 See p. 216 Shaull, R. Containment and Change

11 See "God in Nature and History" in New Directions in Faith and Order (first section)

out of an apparently dead trunk. In Isaiah especially central attention is given to his role as a political revolutionary...12

However if we examine Isaiah we note that he picks up the Old Testament theme that Kings, in the Davidic line, were called to bring in a new age. (of Isaiah 9:1-7, Isaiah 11: 1-10). It is clear that the Kings had tremendous responsibility entrusted to them in moving towards God's kingdom. There was continuity with the Davidic line, a concern that Matthew later took pains to point out. In fact Isaiah only uses the term Messiah once, when he refers to Cyrus as God's anointed one (Isaiah 45:1). The prophets saw the action of Cyrus always in relation to the people of God, that is God had raised up Cyrus to judge and redeem Israel as they had forgotten their covenant obligations. This is considerably different from a political revolutionary Messiah who is working for social reforms in Palestine. Cyrus, the King of Babylon, represented an external force to purify the disobedient ones of Yahweh. We have seen that Shaul takes up biblical themes in a rather easy fashion and uses them for his purpose. For if we are to find the points of contact between secular messianism and biblical messianism, it is extremely important to have a solidly biblical understanding of messianism. It is necessary to really grapple and carefully exegete the key biblical passages on messianism before we leap to the points of contact with humanistic messianism. While I do not claim to be a biblical scholar, I have tried to raise pertinent biblical

12. Bennett, J. Christian Social Ethics in a Changing World, p.28

questions and point to the rather hasty biblical conclusions made by Shaull.

This use of the Scripture also has important consequences for our discernment of God's action in history. For this is really a new theology of God's revelation. If we are to have some criteria to judge what are the signs of God revealing himself in history, they must surely stem from the biblical revelation of the God we know in Jesus Christ. (of John 14:26). I have attempted to show that a Jesus, who combines the political revolutionary and the new man has not exhausted the fullness of the Christological dimensions. While it is true that Shaull writes something of a "tract" proclaiming his view of God's action in contemporary events, his use of biblical material leaves something to be desired. In his approach to God's action in revolution, a more biblical dialectic approach to history seems to be under-emphasized or often lacking.

Another temptation which we can discern in Shaull's writing, is that of the tendency to pull together various signs of the God's Kingdom and then identify the whole "messianic" movement with God's presence. Through his involvement in the life of the people, the prophet from time to time, is called to discern signs of the Kingdom (cf. Matthew 2:6 Matthew 11:4-6). But is the prophet then justified in going the next step, and asserting that where we find messianic movements confronting power structures, there we will find God's presence? This not only pulls together various scattered signs of God's Kingdom into a historical movement but also tries to speak prophetically about

about other similar movements. Obviously this approach is fraught with dangers. This critique is not, in any way, meant to deny the right of the prophet to discern the signs of the Kingdom. Nor is it to deny that these signs can be detected in various manifestations of the contemporary social revolution. If we are to follow in the line of the biblical prophets, though, we must maintain their appreciation for history and their extraordinary familiarity with the Scripture. Even then, we must recognize that our perception of the signs of God's judgment and grace may well be wrong.

iii. Theological

Perhaps we can now move on to different aspects of Shaul's theology and to the question - are there other theological perspectives which will illuminate the current discussion? Following along from this examination of the difficulties of seeing clearly God's action in history, we come up against problems of basing a doctrine of the church on this approach. It is clear that the sectarian Church groups advocated by Shaul can stand over against the culture and sometimes against the Church. Indeed the discovery of the eschatological expectancy of the early church may be one of the more significant theological breakthroughs for our time. ¹³ The institutional church has so emphasized incarnation that it has become rigid and lost this eschatological dimension. We must then seek forms of the church that express

¹³ See The Church Against Itself, R.R. Reuther

this eschatological - incarnational tension in their life and existence. We must also recall that eschatology is linked with mission, for the end will not come until the gospel has been preached to all the nations (of Matthew 28:18-20). The fullness of God's mission involves not only the primary thrust of being the church for others but also concern for renewal among God's people and a sense of hurt over our separations. Thus I would feel that Shaull's "international sectarianism" is fraught with potential dangers if it does not see as one of its tasks to recall the whole church to its essence - a sign of the first fruits of the Kingdom! For the revolutionaries, this will be a task that they will not enjoy. However, from historical and biblical points of view it would seem to be worth considering. Perhaps a sign that God can work through the institutional church is the recent statement by 15 Roman Catholic Bishops from the Third World (six of whom are from Brazil.) This radical statement shows a tremendous concern for the oppressed poor and a recognition of the injustice wrought upon them through the "imperialism of money". It comments on the French Revolution (1789) and asserts "

"History shows... that some revolutions were necessary and rose above their temporary anti-religion producing good fruit" 14

Fidel Castro has interpreted this statement by the Catholic bishops and the revolutionary actions of priests in Latin America as a new force in history. He asserts that Marxists must consider this new dynamism of Christianity in history and recognize that

Communist parties are often becoming the reactionary "opiate of the people". 15 The point of this discussion on the church has been to raise a few questions with regard to the basis for a doctrine of the church and the inherent dangers of sectarianism.

There are other aspects of Shaul's theology which must also be examined. Perhaps one of his more controversial assertions is that theology must become something of an ideology itself. Yet at another stage he calls for a theological re-discovery of Christian transcendence and transgression. Transgression is understood in the historical sense of breaking the bounds of previous limitations and crossing over to new frontiers. There are certain difficulties and perhaps inherent contradictions in these assertions. One must acknowledge that theology is engaged in ideological formation when it makes judgments as to which is just or unjust, human or inhuman - attempts that are aimed at both theory and action. Shaul asserts that theological reflection will be most helpful when it can keep the ideologies "open" rather than closed. Presumably this keeping the ideology open will happen when theology reflects on God's revelation in relation to the situation. The report of the Church and Society Conference affirms this approach:

"Theology reflects not only action but interaction between God's revelation and man's ideological understanding of his own condition and desires". 16

15 Speech in Spanish by Castro - translated at the Ecumenical Institute (not yet published in English)

16 World Conference on Church and Society, Official Report, p.202

Is there not a danger however of emphasizing as the primary theological tasks: i discovering God's action in history (that is God's revelation) and ii ideological formulation? Shaul, of course, acknowledges the need for interaction with the revelation of God in the biblical heritage. However, I do not find that his work displays a "radical" return to roots of the biblical message for nourishment and insights. If he then responds to God's revelation in the situation, what are the criteria for knowing if it is really God's revelation or his own ideological drives? Is there not the inherent danger of mixing up ideology and revelation? One must admit that the danger is present with all theological reflection but Shaul's sloppy use of the bible makes me feel less confident that his theological formulations really can bring the needed qualities of transcendence and transgression. Arthur Rich deals with this key problem in an essay partly concerned with ultimate principles and situation-ethics.

Rich asserts

"...I tend to the view that situation-ethics are right, in so far as God's will is revealed to faith only in confrontation with a concrete situation. But is his will revealed out of the concrete situation or revolutionary situation, or in relation to it?" 17

Rich opts rather strongly for the latter approach with an emphasis on God's commandment as revealed in the Scriptures. It is my feeling that if we are to rediscover the qualities of transcendence and transgression, we will find it in the "eschatological newness"

17 Rich, Arthur "Revolution as a Theological Problem" Background Information Church and Society, No. 38. p. 23.

or sign of the Kingdom which comes as a gift of the God who reveals himself in the Scripture and in his present action. This miraculous point of contact between the two will provide us a source of transcendence. Shaull fails to convince with his biblical exposition and therefore weakens his argument for God's present involvement in revolution. With these biblical difficulties comes also the danger of succumbing to the ideological dogma.

iv. Secular.

This problem of the role of theology in relation to ideology leads us on to the next question - does secular social thinking provide a correction on our theologizing? At this point, I would like to present some of the ideas from Regis Debray's book Revolution in the Revolution, because it is bound to be influential among guerilla movements in Latin America. We must recall that Shaull writes primarily from his experience in Brazil so his strategy should be applicable there. Debray has spent much time in Cuba and other Latin American countries and has recorded the revolutionary thinking of Che Guevara and Fidel Castro. He presents the tactics of guerilla warfare as they were developed in Cuba. Their opposition to the Communist party directing guerilla operations becomes quite clear. The guerilla band, with such tremendous odds stacked against them, must be free to operate independently and have a real flexibility of action. This guerilla band is the new vanguard of the popular uprising, conducting both political and military activities. Those who are part of this guerilla group must give unquestioned obedience to the leader, if the group

is to survive. Castro feels that intellectuals are often particularly unsuited to this task because they are often physically weak and their preconceived ideologies make them less quick to respond to the realities of the situation.

Debray is critical of Trotsky's ideology and the Cuban revolution is clearly developing its own Marxist basis of understanding how revolution is achieved. These ideas bring into question some of Shaul's concepts regarding ideology. A Christian, who is always raising questions and trying to keep the ideology open, would be a dubious asset for the effective functioning of a guerilla group! The key elements in the effective guerilla operation relate to military strategy and also how the military strategy affects the political questions of rallying the peasants behind the guerillas. If the guerilla band was divided into dissenting groups with ideological differences and mistrust of the leader the results would likely be disastrous. Perhaps the approach of Shaul stems largely from the fact that Brazil as yet has no armed guerilla movement. His ideas are more applicable to a "Marxist-Christian" discussion group than to involvement in guerilla bands! The other point of contention with Shaul's writing regarding revolution is that he claims the need is for structures that are "open and flexible". For those concerned about social transformation in Brazil this view may not be radical enough. For in terms of the economic structure of landholding, what may well be needed is a radical redistribution of the land from the rich elite to the masses of the poor. It may be that Shaul intends these "open" structures more for the United

States than Brazil. Perhaps the lesson here is that it is difficult to be a revolutionary theologian on two continents, at the same time! To a degree then, Shaull falls prey to general theorizing and theologizing about revolution rather than allowing theology to spring from involvement in the situations.

D. Harvey Cox - A Critical Evaluation

Let us now turn to the acknowledged prophet of the technological era, Harvey Cox. His book, The Secular City, has evoked such a widespread response that it must be regarded as a seminal work. Cox's style of writing is lucid and stimulating. The challenge of his theological reflections is that he opts for a strong combination of biblical prophecy and immersion in the struggles of history and culture. This book was a tract to stimulate and to challenge us to view history in a different way. The numerous requests for articles by secular magazines signifies that he speaks relevantly to many people in the metropolis. Our task is to examine more carefully and critically the theological work done by Cox. Our first perspective is one of historical reflection and its basis for putting under scrutiny Cox's theology.

i Historical

Since the Secular City was written in 1965 we have been afforded some opportunity to put this book in historical perspective. Both the events of the revolutionary world and other theological points of view have raised certain questions about Cox's proposals, especially the concept that the secular city provides the modern symbol of the Kingdom of God. Various theo-

logians have detected the underlying presuppositions of Hegel and Comte in the writing of Cox. Of course, Hegel's dialectic is more helpful in understanding history than is existentialism. This influence of Hegel is pointed out by Phillip Lee Jr. in a review for the *Scottish Journal of Theology*, where he asserts:

"Professor Cox shows too much confidence in the uniqueness, power and promise of his own age. Like Hegel, he is certain that the present is the climactic moment of countless centuries and civilizations... The daily newspapers make Cox's confidence at least highly suspect!" 16

At a later stage, we will consider in more detail the "secular" objections to the Cox thesis. In his book, Theology for a New World, Dr. Hubert Richardson of Harvard, questions the historical validity of Cox's approach and his analysis of what is really happening. He notes Cox's use of Comte's historical analysis which sees a movement from the early religious period to a middle metaphysical era to a modern anti-religious era. In fact, he observes, all the "secular" theologians point to public atheism as the unique characteristic of our time. Richardson shows how we have seen other periods of public atheism appear in history. Also he explains why these periods occur historically and how they are prophetically significant forces. The essence of Richardson's historical consciousness is seen in the following quotation:

"Public atheism opposes an existing conception of God in the name of new concerns that cannot be given a right or satisfactory treatment within the intellectus which that conception establishes. This explains why periods of public atheism occur at moments of major cross-cultural contact. The atheism of the Greek polis broke out under the pressure of Persian cosmopolitanism. The atheism

18 Lee, Philip J. "Whose City?" - Article Review, Scottish Journal of Theology, Sept. 1966, p. 330

of the thirteenth century broke out when Christianity encountered Islamic science. In these cases, the dominant intellectus was able neither to handle nor even to recognize the new problems created by contact with a new culture"19

Richardson feels that where this atheism is concerned with new ideas of truth and justice, it can be prophetic. Our religious crisis today is caused by the fact that the conception of an individual, personal God can no longer relate to the new cultural reality of social technical environment. Modern corporations and government with their all encompassing sociotechnics "systems" approach to society and its consequent influences on thought patterns, requires that we reshape our conception of God with emphasis on the unifying quality of the Holy Spirit. With the Baptist conceptual background of a personal God, this whole way of looking at the reality of the technological society would be foreign to Cox. It is clear also that Richardson produces very strong historical arguments against the tribe-town-city demythologizing process observed by Cox. These historical weaknesses in the approach used by Cox raise serious questions as to the conclusions which he reaches. For if Cox's thesis on the secular city's relation to the Kingdom of God is to hold, then it must demonstrate its historical validity and not simplify history to the intent which he has done. Another historical factor is the optimism of the American Social Gospel movement of the early twentieth century. Cox acknowledges the needed corrective on this movement, which was made by neo-orthodox theology. However, it is my contention that Cox is dangerously close to falling into these errors again, especially because of

19 Richardson, H. Theology for the New World, p. 7

his views on the nature of sin. This issue relates to the importance of sloth as a source of sin and will be dealt with at a later stage. It is now time to move on to the biblical questions.

ii. Biblical

So we must face the question - does Cox's theology of revolution remain true to the biblical heritage? It is my contention that Cox's serious attempt to relate the Scripture with contemporary reality has meant that his work has had a more profound effect in theological circles. Let us consider, though, how Cox uses the Bible. In developing his thesis, he has found it necessary to use certain scriptural texts which were particularly helpful for him. This often means that he neglects other elements of the biblical heritage. For instance, with his emphasis on the desacralizing of politics at Sinai, Cox does not see fit to examine the Old Testament claims for the "anointed one" of Yahweh especially the kings who were considered to be the servants of Yahweh. Cox does not comment on the other elements of the tradition which do not support his theses. In establishing a biblical basis for his work, Cox also has a tendency to refer to the work of one biblical scholar and then assumes the authority of his position settles the question. We notice this with his reference to "Dr." Amos Wilder's position on the Kingdom of God "in the process of realizing itself." As Norman Perrin points out, in his book The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus, Wilder's emphasis on the reformation of a world order that continues does

not do justice to the New Testament evidence which emphasizes the eschatological nature of the Kingdom. George Peck in his article "The Secular City and the Bible" asserts that Cox has

"an unfortunate habit of falling back on a Doctor ex machina kind of authoritarianism"20

It is certainly true that the emphasis on the Kingdom of God breaking in upon us infuses theology with a real dynamism. However, this approach tends to overlook what has been accomplished in Christ (realized eschatology) and the Kingdom of God which stands over against our ideologies, structures and systems (future eschatology). Both of these biblical themes are played down by Cox, with consequent influences on his theology. With regard to the symbol of the secular city as the best image to understand the Kingdom of God, John Bennett offers a very perceptive critique of where Cox's position is vulnerable.

"...In the development of his argument he compares man's response to the act of God in creating the secular city to the humanity of Jesus in order to show how it is both something that God does and also something that man does. This analogy between the human initiative in Christ and the human initiative in the city, even though a formal one, is highly precarious to say the least" 21

Bennett goes on to point out that Cox and others do not properly distinguish between the normative secular, which implies freedom from idolatry and prejudices, and secularism which is a cultural ideology and system in direct conflict with the Christian. Again with the emphasis on the Kingdom breaking in, one has less critical basis to stand over against cultural secularism.

20 Callahan, D. The Secular City Debate. p. 43

21 Bennett, J.C. Christianity and Crisis, (Dec.26,1966) p. 295

Another aspect of Cox's more recent biblical views is the primacy of prophecy over against apocalypticism and teleology. Cox views the apocalyptic as essentially anti-worldly and negative. It is my contention that recent biblical scholarship, examining the influence of Jewish apocalyptic thought, proves that Cox is mistaken. At the Ecumenical Institute last winter, Dr. J.C. Weber gave a lecture series showing Jewish apocalyptic influences on the writings of Paul citing numerous biblical passages (Gal 4:3-7, 1. Cor 15:20-28, 11 Cor 5:17-18, Col 1:13, Col 2:15, Rom 10:3-4, Rom 8:19, 1 Cor 2:7-8, Rom.6:1-14) 22. He pointed out how these inter-testamental apocalyptic notes had their beginning in prophecy and yet also transcend prophetic thinking. The central assertion was that God was in control of history and that there are two ages. The old age is under the dominion of Satan and the fallen angel. However the new age is about to break in and that God will have victory over the demonic forces. Key words and signs in Jewish apocalyptic were: resurrection; judgment; hope; Son of Man; and powers. These words were taken up by Paul and transformed. For he and also the early church made the startling assertion that the God we know in Jesus Christ has destroyed the old age and ushered in a new age. But the demonic powers, though defeated, continue to have influence so the struggle must go on. D.S. Russell's book, The Method and Message of Jewish Apocalyptic, also makes similar assertions with the contention that Jewish apocalyptic is a major key for under-

22 The Ecumenical Institute (A Graduate School for Ecumenical Studies near Geneva)

standing the New Testament. Thus we find strong biblical arguments which are refuting the disparaging comments of Cox on apocalypticism. Again we notice the tendency in Cox to simplify contrary positions to his own or at times to disregard other positions. Cox's approach to the bible does not lend itself to balanced judgments which maintain the dialectical basis of the biblical accounts. Cox does affirm the biblical assertion of Christ's victory over the principalities and powers, in other sections of his work, but apparently does not consider their apocalyptic basis. In developing this argument, I have tried to show that Cox is on very shaky biblical grounds for his startling assertions of God's action in the City. The basis for his position has not stood unblemished when put under historical and biblical scrutiny. We must now move on to consider other theological perspectives which are appropriate to examining Cox's theology.

iii. Theological

It will be helpful to consider the judgments of Charles West in this regard. West feels that Cox emphasizes a celebration of the secular city liberties but omits the tragic dimensions of the city life. In a reply to his critics, Cox acknowledges this criticism as valid. There are elements of the life of the city which involve "passive" suffering and often insoluble problems for present times. So we are often called to live with these problems with no illusions that they can be easily solved by politics or technology. In another context, namely a commentary on the Church and Society conference, West refers to the weakness of Cox and the theological technocrats:

"The weakness...in short, is that they have tried to solve the problems of technological humanism with a doctrine of creation of which reconciliation, atonement, is a mere continuation. ...It is in the crisis of confrontation with the Redeemer, that man understands the dynamic of Creation in a way that is not simply self-confirming." 23

This critique of Cox is really very profound and we find further evidence for it in Professor Cox's understanding of sin. He is concerned to emphasize man's essential sin as sloth rather than the traditionally held view of man's essential sin as pride. Cox wishes to establish the view that a new Christian conception of man is one of a saint-revolutionary rather than a guilt-ridden sinner. Is it not just possible that Cox is trying to break out of the Baptist heritage, which so emphasized this latter man? Certainly we will require men who take responsibility not only for their own future but also the future of the world community. But does this really probe the depths of man's nature? The apostle Paul talked of the intransigence of evil and how we could see the right thing to do but did the sinful thing (of Romans 7:19-20). Although Christ has defeated the satanic powers and they no longer actually exist, it is clear that for many people these powers still exercise their influence, for example the hidden persuaders of our culture. It is only Christ who can supply man with the power to defeat these powers of the old age. Yet once man believes that he has achieved victory over the principalities and powers he often falls prey to the power of sin in the form of arrogance and pride.

23 West, C. "Technologists and Revolutionaries" p. 11
 (Background Information for Church and Society No. 38)

For man's pride still remains at the base of his estrangement from God and as essential assertion of the biblical understanding of sin (of Luke 1:51). Arising from this view of sin and also his understanding of the Kingdom of God, Cox has less propensity to develop a radical critique of the whole direction of the historical process in the secular cities of our era. He does not really fundamentally criticize the direction of historical change. These missing elements are symptomatic of the serious weaknesses in Cox's theology.

iv. Secular

The question is now raised - does secular social thinking provide a check on Cox's theologizing? Here we can consider what has happened in the "secular cities" of North America in the past few years. During the long hot summers of recent years, parts of the cities have begun to burn. They have been torn by rioting, looting and shooting. Many people have been killed and millions of dollars of property has been destroyed. Boston is no exception with the recent Roxsbury riots. Does this emerging secular city still provide us with the symbol of God's Kingdom breaking in upon us? Perhaps we are seeing signs of God's judgment and wrath rather than liberation and hope? The violence of the war in Vietnam and in the cities has increased. American dreams have been shaken and its confidence is less certain. Does Cox also have second thoughts about the secular city? I suspect that he does. It is perhaps helpful to read again the comments of Cox regarding the assassination of President Kennedy. In examining the deaths

of Kennedy and Albert Camus, Cox asks a doubting question and then answers it, namely:

Do not their meaningless early deaths conjure up dark irrational fears of our world and call into question the notions of adulthood and reasoning responsibility they championed? I think not. Though Kennedy was an artist in his application of reason to politics, and his alleged assassin seems a character from the pages of a Dostoyevsky novel, it is still the spirit of Kennedy which triumphs, not that of his murderer. 24

This year two other American leaders were killed by the assassin's bullet - Martin Luther King - civil rights leader and Robert F. Kennedy - Presidential candidate. The scandal of their tragic loss cannot really be turned aside so easily. One need not subscribe to "irrational fears", to believe that tragedy and death are as much part of the secular city as life and hope!

With this critical evaluation now completed, it is possible to push on with the theological encounter in the midst of revolution. These evaluations will provide us with a base from which to pinpoint the best theological arguments of Thomas, Cox and Shaull. It is also a starting point for some further theological reflection and strategies of action for mission in God's world.

24 Cox, H. The Secular City, p. 78

C H A P T E R I V

TOWARDS THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON REVOLUTIONS AND NEW FRONTIERS FOR MISSION

Our theological encounter with revolutions has now reached a turning point. For now we must not only select a few key theological reflections but these reflections must point towards new models of action. The urgent need for involvement must not close our eyes to the necessity of further theological probing on the frontiers of God's world. With the pressure of this tension between present and future, we may rediscover some of the nourishing roots of our heritage.

The overall pattern for our work has been set by the key questions which were raised in chapter two. However we will have to select and highlight a few key theological perspectives from the large number which developed. Initially we will look at the prophetic issue of God's action in revolutionary movements. We can then turn to eschatology and God's Kingdom. It is in this context that a proper examination can develop regarding God's mission and the church. The eschatological goals of God's mission will provide clues for our direction. In light of this direction and underlying framework, the controversial question of strategy and models of action will be explored. Of particular importance will be a grappling with the questions of non-violent and violent forms of social change vis-a-vis the existing order. We must also strive to look at the theological horizon, from our new vantage point, to discover new frontiers. New questions and method-

ologies as well as radical rediscovery of the biblical message may be called for. These many challenges present themselves in this final phase of our theological journey in God's revolutionary world.

A. God's Action in Revolutionary Movements

The central theological question of God's action in history continues to be a challenge and dilemma for us. Each of the theologians in his own way, set forth interpretations of the "signs of the times". It is my feeling that M.M. Thomas did this in the most convincing theological manner. This is especially true when he used the theme of the action of Christ and the anti-Christ 1. While this theme has certain difficulties with apocalyptic texts being applied to our contemporary society, I feel it is the most helpful way of approaching this question of interpretation. For instance, in the critique of Shaull, we noted the difficulties of his rather undialectic approach in dealing with the demonic, anarchic manifestations that are part of revolutionary movements. Thomas gets around these difficulties by seeing the theological task as discerning "what is of Christ, and what is of the devil" in these movements. At the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Uppsala Sweden in July of 1968, Thomas gave a key-note speech on "Issues Concerning the Life and Work of the Church in a Revolutionary World". This excellent speech gave further indication as to his own interpretation of God's action and also clues as to how this theology

1 See Chapter Two, p.

applied to practice.

"...even when the Church as institution is rejected, the Church's mission has provided the ferment for humanism which has produced the signs and anticipations of the Kingdom in the revolutions of our time... 'the discernment by Christians of what is just and unjust, human and inhuman...is a discipline exercised in continual dialogue with biblical resources, the mind of the Church through history and today and the best insights of social scientific analysis', it is not looking at the complexities of political and economic change as a new revelation, but as part of the continuing work of the living Jesus Christ to awaken man to his true humanity, promised in Christ, and needing the discipline of the gospel for its fulfillment" 2

These comments are also helpful as to whether a theology of revolution has become a new theology of revelation.

Hendrikus Berkhof also dealt with this problem of interpreting the signs of the times in his Uppsala speech "The Finality of Christ". Berkhof asks the question how are we to judge these revolutionary movements. He rightly notes that Jesus is The Sign (Luke 12:56, Matthew 16:3) and the ambiguity of events dictates that good and evil signs must be discerned from various shades of grey rather than in black and white forms. Thus we should not fall into the trap of having an interpretation of the signs of the times become a sheer identification with forms that are not final. Do these cautious remarks mean that there is no hope of interpreting God's action in revolutionary movements? I think not. For me, easily the most prophetic words at the Uppsala assembly dealt concretely with this very theme. Dr. W.A. Visser't Hooft, former

2 Thomas, M.M. "Issues Concerning the Life and Work of the Church in a Revolutionary World", p. 5.
(Uppsala Speech No. 25)

General Secretary of the World Council of the World Council of Churches, analyzes and commented on 1968 as a year of world-wide social and cultural crisis in the order of 1848, 1918 and 1945. The revolutionary protest at the major university centres around the world not only signalled a profound educational crisis but also that youth were putting into question the whole orientation of our civilization. Political and economic systems were thrown into question as were the way and meaning of life which they entailed. Despite the at times excessive and intolerant forms of these protests, their questions are the real questions because they dealt really with the "meaning of our common life". The final words of Visser't Hooft's speech brought the assembly to its feet in applause.

"We did not plan that this Assembly on the God-given renewal of all things should be held in the very year of explosive demands for radical renewal of society. But now that without our doing, but not without higher guidance, we are in an unprecedented situation, we are bound to make clear that he who will make all things new at the end of time, has a word of hope and direction for all those who look for renewal in the present. For the spiritual energies of the age to come of which the epistle to the Hebrews speaks, (Hebrew 6:5) are already at work in the present age." 3

So with this prophetic utterance standing as a impetus and challenge for us, perhaps we can now turn to reflection on the related biblical questions. In doing so, I hope it will not be without a profound respect for the prophetic calling of interpreting God's action in history and the risks of interpreting morally ambiguous

3 Visser't Hooft, W.A. "The Mandate of the Ecumenical Movement", p.10 (Uppsala Speech No. 2)

(grey) events which that calling entails.

B Eschatology and God's Kingdom

From the three theologians we have examined, the tremendous relevance of biblical eschatology within the framework of God's Kingdom has become apparent. Revolutionaries with their hope and zeal for an open future have caused us to rethink our biblical heritage. Rapid change often promoted by technological advance has raised important questions regarding both our ability to cope with this change and the shape of the future society. Similarly biblical scholars have helped us to see again the eschatological passages in the Bible and the influence of Jewish apocalyptic literature on the New Testament. These forces of secular movements and biblical scholarship are bound to contain their influence on theological discussion, as we search for creative new insights which relate to these pressing social problems. In the previous evaluation, we have noted the inadequate development of a biblical basis of eschatology in relation to God's action in history. Harvey Cox has perhaps made the most full-fledged effort at biblical exegesis, then creatively relating this to our present struggles. This was especially true of his biblical study on the eschatological goal of "shalom", although his ideas on God's Kingdom were less helpful. At this point, one cannot help but feel the necessity of the whole Christian community coming to grips with these theological problems. What really seems to be required is a group of theologians, biblical scholars, social scientists and secular activists immersed in a concrete historical

revolutionary struggle. In light of their dialogue and search, some authentic theological and biblical reflections may begin to emerge. Since the prospect of such a group undertaking this task is not particularly expected at this time, we must be content with trying to push further the tentative steps forward which we have already made.

One of the more concise and clear statements which has been developed in this theological struggle in the wilderness is from the Zagorsk Theological Consultation earlier this year. It attempts to relate the contemporary revolutionary phenomena to Christian eschatology in the following manner:

"In a sense, revolution in its basic human concern could be interpreted as an effort of the world to express historically something of the eschatological renewal of all things promised by God. Eschatological faith tends, on the one hand, towards the end of history and the fulfillment of God's promises to man, and thus activates man to hope and work for the transformation of the world. On the other hand, the fulfillment is already accepted as present in Christ, the Crucified. Therefore, under this light, we can be free both to accept and to criticize the revolutionary trends in the world". 4

Our faith in the eschatological goals of history then, allows us to accept these "revolutionary trends". Similarly, our understanding of the Crucified Christ gives us the perspective from which to judge and criticize these movements. Here we also find the framework of God's Kingdom which encompasses both what has been accomplished in Christ and what will be accomplished with the final

4 Study Encounter Vol 1V No. 2 1968, "Reflections on Theology and Revolution Following The 1966 World Conference on Church and Society in Geneva", p. 76

coming of God's "new heaven and new earth" (Rev. 21:1). Indeed, it was this eschatological theme of "Behold, I make all things new" from the Book of Revelations, which was the central theme of the recent Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches. In biblical understanding the Greek word "ta panta" (all things) includes mankind as well as all the other things of God's creation. This renewal of all things is both our present task and a future goal. For renewal comes ultimately as a gift of God as he is the one who sits on the throne and says "Behold I make all things new" (Rev. 21:5). As we struggle to develop a Christian vision of the all encompassing oneness of mankind, which seems so essential in a chaotic and divided world, we must not forget the tragic reality symbolized by the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11). Thus we see again the importance of responding to "signs of the times" which are real signs of God's action in history leading us on to the realization of His Kingdom. The framework of God's Kingdom set in the tension of Christ's finality and the eschatological fulfillment thus provides the context for our earlier concern to interpret God's action in history.

This framework also enables us to grasp the point of contact with God's mission for his church. A concern to rediscover the central role of eschatology for theology and the mission of the church, are among the key areas examined by Jurgen Moltmann in his recent book Theology of Hope. Moltmann strives to relate God's mission for the Church in the world to the eschatological vision of God's Kingdom:

"The will and expectation of God are voiced in the mission of Christ and in the apostolate. The Church lays claim to the whole of humanity in mission... The Christian Church has not to serve mankind in order that this world may remain what it is, or may be preserved in the state it is, but in order that it may transform itself and become what it is promised to be. For this reason 'Church for the world' can mean nothing else but 'Church for the Kingdom of God' and the renewing of the world. This means in practise that Christianity takes up mankind - or to put it more concretely, the Church takes up the society with which it lives - into its own horizon of expectation of the eschatological fulfillment of justice, life, humanity and sociability and communicates in its own decisions in history its openness and readiness for this future and its elasticity towards it". 5

This link between eschatology and mission enables us to move on to consider more fully if this eschatological vision provides a new basis for the stance of the Church in relation to society.

C God's Mission and the Church

The concept of God's mission or "missio dei" must serve to guide our efforts at rethinking the role of the Church in society.

"Missio Dei" embodies the concept that

"In the mission of Jesus we recognize God as a sending God. God's people experience God's Lordship in being sent. The witness and obedience of the Church are determined by this experience" 6

As we have seen, it is God's concern to "make all things new". This involves a renewal of all men and things in society as well as the Church. Therefore the Church is called to participate in God's transformation and renewal of society. In so far as the Church par-

5 Moltmann, J. Theology of Hope, p. 327, 328

6 Weiser T. Planning for Mission, p. 49

ticipates in God's renewal of all things, it will itself be remade anew. Our missionary proclamation, though, must be made in the light of its Old Testament background and more particularly the concept of "shalom". Our traditional concern for man's individual reconciliation with God must be coupled with the goals of freedom and hope that are also part of shalom. This will also mean a re-discovery of the Hebrew understanding of social liberation as expressed in the feast of the Passover, that "while we are now in slavery, next year we hope to be free". This sense of celebrating the feast of liberation against the facts of bondage which are everywhere apparent, is echoed by Martin Luther King Jr. in his final speech - "I want you to know tonight, that we as a people will get to the promised land". Shalom, the eschatological goal of mission, was previously described by Moltmann as embodying "justice, life, humanity and sociability..." In light of this humanizing goal which God is calling us to work towards, we must consider a new stance for the Church in society. Though there have been notable historical exceptions (Cromwell, the radical sects etc.), the church has historically tended to be on the side of law and order established by the state. In many cases, this law has tended to remain static rather than dynamic and thus served to reinforce the status quo. In light of our previous examination of eschatology and the goals of God's Kingdom (shalom), it is theologically unacceptable to simply equate the stance of the Church with law and order.

The Zagorsk Consultation emphasized that we must develop a dynamic relationship between justice and law. At certain times, due to manifest injustice done to people, the church may wish to be clearly

on the side of those who seek justice when the status quo is inhuman. This will mean a new understanding of the mission of the Church that seeks to identify with those involved in revolutionary power struggles for greater participation and justice. Indeed the mission document number two from Uppsala recognized revolutionary movements as a priority situation for mission today. If the revolutionary movement is successful, a new order will be established which is mandated to change laws to achieve a greater embodiment of social justice. By supporting the revolutionary movement which has placed the priority of justice, the Church may thus have contributed also to a renewal of law and order, that is restoring the dynamism of law. There would be other times, that the church might side with the existing order where there is a grave threat of losing all that has been achieved in historical progress towards a more just society. Thus the church would be in an "open" position to take a positive view towards revolutionary movements with the priority on justice or at other times, to support the existing order amidst the threat of greater injustice. This openness allows the development of a dynamic relation between the church's stance in relation to order and to justice. As it is readily apparent, this opens up many related areas for discussion.

The opponents of this argument would likely be quick to point out that revolutions are in danger of betrayal especially through a self-righteous fanaticism. This internal enemy of the revolution may have special danger for the revolution both in the revolutionary process and following the revolutionary upheaval. It is here that the Christian Church with its understanding of

eschatology can have a critical word to say to the revolutionaries if they try to put a "freeze on history" and sanctify the revolution into a scheme of salvation. This same eschatology, though, stands over against all attempts to render sacred the structures and ideologies of the status quo. The gospel puts in crisis both the revolutionary and the upholder of the status quo!

Another factor which is likely to arise is that the Christian Church is likely to have to work with revolutionaries and advocates of "law and order" in its midst. Is there a point where fellowship and reconciliation become impossible? The universality of the Church should help remind the Christian revolutionary of the importance of reconciliation and treating his enemy in a "human" way by minimizing hatred and emphasizing dialogue. Thomas in his Uppsala speech made reference to this concern for reconciliation and also emphasized the Christian role in the revolution that of making it more human and keeping it realistic. For revolutionary movements are particularly prone to utopian schemes and similarly a inclination to see only the goodness of man's nature. It is likely that these vital questions will divide churches - this is already becoming evident in the United States! These are problems which are inevitable, however, as the gospel when it is properly understood and acted is both a scandal and a threat to the security of everyone. Reconciliation, in light of our eschatological goals, is both something to be striven for and yet comes finally as a gift of the Spirit of Christ.

At this stage, as we move to consider the more difficult questions of strategy, the speech of M.M. Thomas again is extremely

helpful in this regard:

"Great confusion of thought has come about from the inability in the post-Geneva discussions by not distinguishing between the basic revolution for participation and justice and the more ambiguous strategies of revolution. While there could be general Christian agreement about affirming the revolutionary ferment and goal as valid expressions of human dignity, as the recent Prague Christian Peace Conference points out 'the strategy is the locus of danger and ambiguity'" 7

It is these questions of strategy where we find the thought of Richard Shaull most helpful even though it is not without its problems. When we begin to discuss how social changes happens, the questions of violent and non-violent strategies always come to the foreground.

In this discussion of strategy, the "situation" is of paramount importance. The situation must be taken with deadly seriousness both for the sake of success of the strategy and in order that we don't fall prey to general theorizing. It is here that an analysis of the existing conditions and the power structure is essential. For the revolutionary movement must be a double process of: i analysis, critique and destruction of existing inhuman structures; and ii. building up of new models or patterns for economic and political structures. In the process of analysis and critique of the status quo, various strategies may lend themselves to the existing situation. Very often strategies for social change are dictated by the existing systems and structures of power. Shaull points out that where structures are open and flexible, change can take place in a peaceful and more easy fashion. This discussion on change pre-

7 Thomas, M.M. "Issues Concerning the Life and Work of the Church in a Revolutionary World," p. 7

supposes that conditions dictate that change. In the early sketches of India, Brazil and Boston it is clear that social change is required in all instances. The strategies adopted in each case, however, may well be quite different! Normally social change should occur through democratic channels which have been developed for that purpose. However, in many instances, the existing systems of power have made these channels ineffective. The next viable option is normally to bring to light an existing injustice through a symbolic non-violent act of civil disobedience. If the public social conscience has been sufficiently alarmed at this particular injustice or inhuman condition, then this public opinion can often exert considerable pressure. The power structures may then effect a change rather quickly. On the other hand, the power structures may have such a strong vested interest in the status quo that they will not be sensitive to change through either normal democratic channels or through non-violent acts of civil disobedience. The question then becomes, should violent strategies of social change be employed as a last resort? For many revolutionaries violence is justified on several grounds. They argue that existing power structures are committing acts of violence and destruction every day. In Brazil, for instance, the elite of the country rest easily on the status quo while the structures they support condemn thousands of children to starvation and illiteracy. These structures must be regarded as "destructive" when they deny masses of people the fullness of humanity, while protecting the vested interests of a small elite. The revolutionaries will also point out that the existing power structures usually initiate the use of violence in putting down any

threats to their security. These are indeed powerful arguments for the Christian whose conscience is outraged at the existing inhumanity of the status quo.

For Christians to enter into strategies of violence, to effect change for greater participation and justice, he must also reflect on the guidance offered by the Christian community and the Bible. It is relatively clear that the Old Testament prophets viewed the suffering of the poor and the oppressed as a scandal which could not be tolerated by the religious community. Amos, for instance, continually judged the community for its exploitation of the poor and its easy conscience in worship. As we move to the New Testament, there are other considerations of importance. Earlier we considered a possible biblical exegesis with Jesus "violently" throwing the money leaders out of the temple. The supreme Christian guidelines, which were laid down by Jesus, were to love God and to love your neighbor. This involves creative imagination and discipleship in discerning how God would have us act in a revolutionary situation. Remaining with the situation of Brazil, how do I love my brother who is starving there? In working out my obligation of love for my neighbor, this may mean acting to reform the existing institutions where I have influence. Does the obligation of love call me also to engage in revolutionary action to enable my brother to be set free? I think all of us are called to be Christian revolutionaries because God's Kingdom judges all our finite forms of justice. This may mean that some of us are involved in the use of violence.

However, violence is not the essence of revolution.

Indeed those who argue that violence and revolution are the same, usually are either romantic revolutionaries or protectors of the status quo. To bring fundamental change, violence may be necessary but it is certainly not the only strategy available to a revolutionary. For revolutionary movements must be intensely politically conscious and sensitive to the feelings of the masses. Irresponsible violence will often turn even the oppressed masses against the revolution. The close link between military and political activities was a key note of Regis Debray's book, Revolution in the Revolution. A revolutionary movement, using the Cuban model, places the stress on a constant interaction and dialogue between the leaders of the revolution and the masses. If the revolution is to be a true revolution for participation and justice of the masses, then it cannot remain insensitive to the ideas of the people. Doctrinaire strategies advocating violence being the only way of revolution, simply are unacceptable from the considerations of developing a mass movement and also from the point that non-violent strategies may be more effective. Always the guerilla group must remain flexible and mobile to try different strategies. Despite the argument I have tried to develop here, it is sadly true that in many situations, the existing power structures have dictated that violence is the only way open for change. Perhaps South Africa is the clearest example of this. The Brazil government on the other hand, has allowed student and worker groups to openly engage in a march protest against the regime. Thus there are still other strategies open to the revolutionaries. This does not rule out, however, that violent strategies may be needed to bring about

the needed radical structural changes. Surely the Christian role, in a revolutionary movement such as this is to emphasize non-violent strategies of change, for violence always represents a failure in human cooperation and dialogue. Indeed, this was the challenge that Martin Luther King had for the black power advocates, when he said in effect "why copy white violence, it is the worst value of American life." King was sensitive to the dehumanizing and demonic aspects of violence. However the situation in America is somewhat different than it is in Latin America. This is evidenced by a recent statement of 700 priests to a Latin American conference of bishops. Their statement called for a recognition of the occasional need for violence to change the conditions that are oppressing millions. For those of us from the rich nations, these may sound like scandalous words. However we must listen to our brothers from the south, whose Christian consciences have led them to the point of making this statement.

If we are to reflect for a moment on all these considerations of violence and non-violence, there are several factors that emerge. The difference between various situations must continue to inform our discussion of strategy. Political factors must also be key considerations in a revolutionary movement and usually dictate open, flexible strategies. From a theological point of view, I have tried to develop the various biblical factors informing the Christian conscience, notably the demand to love our brother. For there is no pure Christian position in this question of violence and non-violence. This has been shown with earlier pacifist and non-pacifist discussions on violence. Both the Christian who takes up

arms to set his brother free and the Christian who works for non-violent change though it may not succeed, are doing something less than agape love. Similarly both must rely on God's grace, not their own works, to free them from their sins, for example sins of commission and omission. For the Christian may be at different times a revolutionary or a reformer. This point is made in a theological way by Charles West, in a paper on the Christian-Marxist dialogue:

"The Christian can be, sometimes must be a violent revolutionary, but he can only be so in view of a continuing and deeper revolution which transforms him and his enemy, finally overruling the conflict. Victory, except as applied to Christ, is not a New Testament category. The Christian may also be a reformist because he can see signs of grace and hope for freedom in social conditions where the dogmatic revolutionary must, to preserve his righteousness, see only monolithic wrong. But he can only be so as he sees particular changes as signs of the one basic change which has come and will come into the world in Christ's Kingdom." 8

In West's comments we can see both the concern for the human issues of a particular situation and the categories of thought that are informed by the biblical theological heritage. The Zagorsk consultation called this "dialectical interaction" between the situation and Christian principles. This method may well point a new way forward for Christian social ethics that emphasizes the strengths and avoids the weaknesses of both "situation ethics" (inductive method) and principle ethics (deductive method). It was this dialectical interaction that I attempted to keep present in the examination of strategies of violence and non-violence. Since violence is really

8 West, Charles Are We Revolutionaries Together? p. 5.
Christian-Marxist Dialogue Geneva, April 8-11, 1968
Church and Society Internal Publication.

a most controversial question among Christians, it was necessary to reflect more fully on that aspect of revolutionary change strategies. These questions of violence relate both to the ethical consideration of individual Christians as well as the theological approval or disapproval of the Church. While the whole Church will likely not be involved in a revolutionary struggle, the Church can recognize that for some Christians it will be part of their Christian obedience. The Christian revolutionaries must be regarded as part of the Church and certainly in need of the support and prayers of fellow Christians. Indeed these radical Christian groups, who are more free to engage in social action, can perform several key tasks in relation to the Church. Not only are they able to stimulate and challenge the church but also they are unofficially speaking and acting for the Church to the secular world. It will be important for these radical groups to maintain a sense of Christian identity and community when they are involved in secular revolutionary struggles. For their distinctive contribution to the revolution, Christians will depend largely on the depth of their theological reflection and their freedom to see reality for what it really is, not what a "doctrinaire" ideology imposes the situation. Once again when we enter into a discussion of the Christian contribution to the revolution we are confronted with the difficulty in generalizing as different situations confound our nice theories.

For instance, one can make a strong case for saying that the distinctive Christian contribution will come in the post-revolutionary period. The experience of the Christian Church in Czechoslovakia would appear to bear this out. Joseph Smolik, a

Protestant theologian from Prague, made this point in recent discussions at the Ecumenical Institute. He emphasized that during the revolutionary struggle, the movement was forced to simplify reality to fit their ideology. Christian critiques of the ideology would likely be misinterpreted, at this stage, and the assumption would be that Christians were really siding with the status quo. Whereas after the revolutionary movement has taken over power, there is less threat to their existence and they are more open to dialogue. Indeed, dialogue is crucial to de-mythologize the revolution because some illusions of the revolutionary ideology may be harmful in effectively carrying out reforms for greater participation and justice. The question of theological interaction with ideology is one which is really just beginning to open up as we start dialogues with Marxists. Smolik, for instance, was very appreciative of Roger Garaudy's attempt to develop "new models" for the future society which are by nature more open and flexible than what is normally understood by closed and fixed ideologies. Underlying our further discussions with the Marxists will be the problems of human nature and the manner of social change.

We must turn to the question of human nature shortly but first a closing comment about strategies of social change. Due to the current importance of discussion on how social change comes about and the questions of violence, it has been necessary to do less than justice to many practical strategies which the churches might employ.²

² There are some excellent suggestions for action in:

- i. The Beirut Conference Report
- ii. Line and Plummett by Richard Dickinson
- iii. Uppsala Section #Three "World Economic and Social Development."

For it is certainly true that underlying the discussion on revolution in the "Third World" is the necessity for radical transformation of the world economic and political structures, which leave one half of the world starving or near starvation. The task for the churches and others in the developed countries is both educational and political. For we must undertake through schools, universities and adult education programs an educational task about the world in which we live. Then as a follow up to this education, it will be necessary to develop the political will to make the needed changes. A different set of strategies will be required for the Third World. Our international solidarity will come as we work for revolutions bringing participation and justice and look forward with hope to when "all things are made new"

(Rev. 21:5)

D. New Frontiers for Mission

As we look forward to the future, new frontiers of mission for further dialogue and theological reflection are beginning to open up. In the area of strategies for mission, the World Council of Churches is undertaking a follow-up study to the Church for Others with an examination of "the mission of the church within institutions". The impetus of this study came from the United States, where the external force of the black power and civil rights revolution has confronted those Christians working within institutions to ask questions such as: how will I work as a change agent within my company to help it fulfill its corporate responsibility vis a vis the unemployed Negro? Is it possible to harness both external and internal forces working for social change, so that dramatic change can

take place? These are questions we are called to pursue.

M.M. Thomas raises another important question regarding strategies of action on the frontier of mission:

"...whether the strategy adopted for revolutionary change of power-structure has within it the structural means to control chaos and move on to effect the fundamental objective of the revolution, namely, the enlargement of the participation of the people and the prevention of the establishment of privileged groups." 10

Thomas sees the need for this structural control so that the concerns of "person-in-community" and the human being can be preserved against a betrayal of the revolution. Participation in mission lays a heavy responsibility for those who are involved in revolutionary struggles.

The concern for the human being represents a central motivation both for the life and work of the church and for secular forces. However, our desire for a "human" revolution and a new human model for society forces us to go deeper and ask the question - what do we mean by human? This question also is the subject of a major inter-disciplinary study by the World Council of churches into the nature of the "humanum". H.E. Todt, at the Zagorsk consultation, presented an excellent paper on this subject and he suggested that the humanum involved three fundamental aspects: i activity; ii suffering for others; and iii a search for identity. He emphasized that our discussion on what it means to be human must be dynamic because there is a danger that our present definitions will limit our future understanding and possibilities. The task of Christian theology, in this discussion on the humanum, would be to relate the new humanity of

10 Thomas, M.M. Issues Concerning the Life and Work of the Church in a Revolutionary World, p. 10

Christ to the secular concern for a new man and a "human" society.

It is clear that future theological reflection on revolutions must also be very concerned with this "humanum" study. We must also move into a position of fuller dialogue and involvement with the secular world. It is my conviction, having worked through this study, that our theological reflection and perspectives should arise following or during revolutionary action and discussion. In the midst of a revolutionary cadre, theological reflection may come to life in an authentic way. Similarly we must begin theology by reading the secular literature on revolution, whether it be Mao Tse Tung or Che Guevara or Rudi Dutschke, and then try to think theologically and biblically about what they have written. Perhaps in the midst of this revolutionary involvement and dialogue, our theology may find new life and become a sign of God's newness that is breaking in upon us.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. World Council of Churches Publications and Unpublished Papers 1.

i. Church and Society Conference (Geneva 1966)

- Preparatory Volumes

Bennett, J.C. (editor) Christian Social Ethics in a Changing World, Associated Press, New York, 1966

de Vries, E. (editor) Man in Community Associated Press New York, 1966

Matthews, Z.K. (editor) Responsible Government in a Revolutionary Age; Association Press, New York, 1966

Munby, Denys (editor) Economic Growth in World Perspective, Association Press, New York, 1966

- Conference Speeches

Borovoy, Archpriest "The Challenge and Relevance of Theology to the Social Revolutions of our Time" (Speech No. 20)

Castillo-Cardenas, Gonzales "Christians and the Struggle for a New Social Order in Latin America" (Speech No. 7)

Conteris, Hiber "Ideological Options and Political Dynamism" (Speech No. 17)

de Almeida, Prof. Candido Mendes "Structural Ambivalence of Latin America " (Speech No. 22)

Ige, Bola "The Political Dynamics of Newly Awakened Peoples" (Speech No. 9)

Presbisch, Dr. Raul "Political and Economic Dynamics of Newly Awakened Peoples" (Speech No. 18)

Shaul, Richard "The Revolutionary Challenge to Church and Theology" (Speech No. 16) (Published in Theology Today, January, 1967)

Thomas, M.M. "Modernisation of Traditional Societies and the Struggle for a New Cultural Ethos" (Speech No. 10)

1 Note: A chronological order is used for the part of the bibliography dealing with the Conferences of the World Council of Churches. The other section will use an alphabetical order.

Wendland, Heinz-Deitrich "The Church and Revolution"
(Speech No. 6) (published in The Ecumenical Review
October, 1966)

- Conference Reports and Commentaries

Abrecht, P. and Thomas, M.M. (editors) Official Report
- World Conference on Church and Society, Imprimerie La
Concorde, Lausanne, 1967

Background Information for Church and Society (No. 35 and
36) Howe, Gunther and Todt, Heinz, Eduard
"Peace in the Scientific and Technical Age"

Background Information for Church and Society (No. 38)
West, Charles "Technologists and Revolutionaries"
Rich, Arthur "Revolution as a Theological Problem"

The Development Apocalypse (or) Will International Injustice
Kill the Ecumenical Movement?
Risk Issues 1 and 2, 1967
"Geneva 1966: Official Church Reactions"
Study Encounter Vol IV, No. 2 - 1968

ii. Zagorsk Consultation (March 17-23, 1968) Zagorsk, U.S.S.R.

Background Papers

No. 1 Butler, B.C. "The Notion of Imago Dei: Its
Significance for Social Ethics"

No. 2 Todt, Heinz Edward "The Christian Understanding of
Man in View of the Questions Raised by Modern Changes
in Society"

No. 3 Bennett, J.C. "Theology and the 1966 World Conference
on Church and Society (A Summary of the Issues)"

Report

"Theological Issues of Church and Society - Statement of the
Zagorsk Consultation" Study Encounter Vol. IV No. 2, 1968

iii. Beirut Conference (April 21-27, 1968) Beirut, Lebanon
World Development: The Challenge to the Churches Report of
The Conference on World Cooperation for Development To
World Council of Churches and Pontifical Commission on
Justice and Peace.

iv. Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches, Uppsala,
Sweden (July 4-20, 1968)

(Other) Preparatory Documents.

Drafts for Sections - Uppsala, 1968, Imprimerie La Concorde, Lausanne, 1968

New Directions in Faith and Order, Imprimerie La Concorde, Lausanne, 1968

The Church for Others Two Reports on the Missionary Structure of the Congregation; Imprimerie, Paul Loosei, Geneva, 1967

Dickinson, R. Line and Plummet, Imprimerie La Concorde, Lausanne, 1968

The New Delhi Report (3rd Assembly of the World Council of Churches) S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1962

The Ecumenical Review, Vol. XIX No. 4, October 1967 - Issue on Development

Conference Speeches

Berkhof, H. "The Finality of Christ - Our Common Confession and Implications for Today" (Speech No. 3)

Kuanda, Kenneth D. "The Rich and Poor Nations" (Speech No. 8)

Parmar, S.L. "Section III - Introductory Statement to Plenary" (III Speech No. 4)

Thomas, M.M. "Issues Concerning the Life and Work of the Church in a Revolutionary World" (Speech No. 25)

Visser't Hooft, W.A. "The Mandate of the Ecumenical Movement", (Speech No. 2)

Conference Statements and Commentaries.

Final Reports on Sections II, III, VI (Mission, World Economic and Social Development, New Styles of Living)

Assembly in a Hungry World - Risk, Vol IV, No. 2, 1968

v. Other Publications of the World Council of Churches

Weiser, T. Planning for Mission. The U.S. Conference for the World Council of Churches, New York, 1966

"The Christian-Marxist Dialogue on the Renewal of Society", Background Information for Church and Society No. 39

West, Charles "Are We Revolutionaries Together?" (Church and Society Internal Publication)

"The Lordship of Christ over the World and the Church"
Study Documents for Division of Studies of the World
Council of Churches.

Dilemmas and Opportunities Christian Action in Rapid
Social Change, Imprimerie La Concorde, Lausanne, 1959

II. Books and Articles

Abbott, Walter, M. (editor) The Documents of Vatican II
American Press, New York, 1966

Abrecht, Paul, The Churches and Rapid Social Change
Doubleday & Company Inc., New York, 1961

Alves, Rubem "Priorities for Peace in Inter-American Relations"
World Christian Education Vol. XXII, No. 2 and 3, 1967

Arendt, Hannah On Revolution The Viking Press,
New York, 1963.

Bennett, John C. "The Church and the Secular"
Christianity and Crisis, Dec. 26, 1966

Berkhof, Hendrikus, Christ the Meaning of History, S.C.M.
Press Ltd., London, 1966

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich Letters and Papers for Prison
Fontana Books, London, 1953

Callahan, Daniel, The Secular City Debate, The MacMillan
Company, New York, 1966

Converse, Hyla Stuntz (compiler) Raise A Signal - God's
Action and the Churches Task in Latin America Today,
Friendship Press, New York, 1961.

Converse, Paul and Thomas, M.M. Revolution and Redemption,
Friendship Press, New York, 1955.

Cox, Harvey God's Revolution and Man's Responsibility
The Judson Press, Valley Forge, 1965.

Cox, Harvey, The Secular City
MacMillan Company, New York, 1965

Cox, Harvey, On Not Leaving It To The Snake
S.C.M. Press Ltd. London, 1968

Cox, Harvey, "Technology and Democracy" Technology and
Culture in Perspective, The Church Society for College Work,
Cambridge, 1968

Cullman, Oscar The State in the New Testament, S.C.M. Press
Ltd., London, 1957

Debray, Regis, Revolution in the Revolution? Penguin Books,
London, 1968

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

1890-1891

Evans, Donald (editor) Peace Power and Protest, Ryerson Press Ltd., Toronto, 1967

Guevara, Che, Guerilla Warfare, Vintage Books, New York, 1968

Hoffman, Bengt Runo, Indian Protestant and Orthodox Social Ethics 1947 - 1962.
(Ph.D. Dissertation) Yale University Press, New Haven, 1963

Houtart, Francois and Pin, Emile
The Church and the Latin American Revolution
Sheed & Ward Ltd., New York, 1965

Hromodka, Joseph L. "The Present International Crisis"
Communio Viatorum, XI, I - 2.
Ecumenical Institute of Comenius Faculty, Prague

"The Just Revolution" (Prague Peace Conference Report)
Frontier, Spring, 1967

The Latin American Revolution (issue) Student World (No.164)
1964

Lehmann, Paul Ethics In a Christian Context, S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1963.
"The shape of Theology for a World in Revolution"
Motive April, 1965

Lee, Phillip Jr. "Whose City?" Scottish Journal of Theology,
Vol. 19, No. 3, September, 1966

Mackie, Robert and West, Charles The Sufficiency of God,
S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1963.

Moltmann, Jurgen, Theology of Hope, S.C.M. Press Ltd.
London, 1967

Moltmann, Jurgen, "Towards a Political Hermeneutic of the Gospel" Union Seminary Quarterly Review Vol. XXIII, No. 4
Summer, 1968

Ogelsby, Carl and Shaull, Richard, Containment and Change
The MacMillan Company, New York, 1967

Orchard, Ronald K., Witness in Six Continents, Edinburgh House Press, London, 1964.

Parmar, Samuel, L. Revolution in the Non Western World,
Ecumenical Institute Report on 1966 Summer Course for
Theological Students.

Pelly, Raymond "Theology of Revolution?" University of Geneva Faculty of Theology, Geneva, 1966

Perrin, Norman The Kingdom of God in the Teaching of Jesus, S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1968

Rendtorff, Trutz and Todt, Heinz, Edward
Theologie der Revolution Analysen und Materialien
Suhrkamp Verlag, Frankfurt, 1968

Reuther, Rosemary Radford, The Church Against Itself
Sheed and Ward, London, 1967

Richardson, Alan Theological Wordbook of the Bible, S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1950

Richardson, Hubert, Theology for a New World, S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1968

Robertson, E.H. Christians Against Hitler, S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1962

Shaul, Richard Encounter with Revolution
Association Press, New York, 1955

Shaul, Richard, "The Present Life and Structure of the Church in Relation to Her Witness in Latin America Society"
Background Information for Church and Society (No. 30)

Shaul, Richard, "The Christian World Mission in a Technological Era" Ecumenical Review, July 1965

Shaul, Richard, "Christian Initiative in the Latin American Revolution" Christianity and Crisis Jan. 10, 1966

Shaul, Richard, "The Presence of God and the Human Revolution" McCormick Quarterly, January, 1967

Shaul, Richard, "Christian Faith as Scandal in a Technocratic Age" Consumers or Revolutionaries? Foyer, John, Knox, Geneva, 1968.

Shaul, Richard, "Theology and Transformation of Society"
Theology Today, April, 1968

Smolik, Joseph "Revolutionary Violence and the Dictatorship of Consumption" Consumers or Revolutionaries?
Foyer, John, Knox, Geneva, 1968

Taylor, Richard W. and Thomas, M.M.
Mud Walls and Steel Mills, Friendship Press, New York, 1963

Thomas, M.M. (editor and compiler) Christian Participation in Nation Building The National Council of India and the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore, 1960

Thomas, M.M. The Christian Response to the Asian Revolution, S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1966

Thomas, M.M. "Indian Nationalism - A Christian Interpretation" Religion and Society, June, 1959

Thomas, M.M. "Christ's Promise Within the Revolution" Religion and Society, April, 1961

Thomas, M.M. "Interpretations of Gandhian Non-Violence in the Context of Chinese Aggression" Religion and Society March, 1963

Thomas, M.M. "Church and Society Lecture Notes" South East Asia Journal of Theology, October, 1964

Thomas, M.M. "Dynamic Secularism" Background Information for Church and Society

Thomas, M.M. "The Gospel and the Quest of Modern Asia" Union Seminary Quarterly Review, March, 1967

Ward, Barbara, The Rich Nations and The Poor Nations C.B.C. Publications, Toronto, 1961. Speech at House of Commons, London, April 20, 1968

Weber, Hans-Reudi Asia and the Ecumenical Movement (1895-1961) S.C.M. Press Ltd., London, 1963

Williams, Colin, Faith in a Secular Age, Fontana Books, London, 1966

Winter, Paul On the Trial of Jesus Walter De Gruyter & Co. Berlin, 1961

Wolf, H.H. "Christ at Work in History" The Ecumenical Review, January, 1966.

Van Leeuwen, Arend th Christianity in World History, Edinburgh House Press, London, 1964.

B29908